The Believer's Republic

From Henry's Marriage to Harvard's Ascendancy:
An Institutional Arc Across Five Centuries

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with Claude (Anthropic)

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A Note on This Collaboration

This study is one product of an ongoing collaboration. The working method behind it is simple to describe and worth stating plainly, because the division of labor is real and neither half would produce the work alone.

The insight and direction are Thomas Bryan's. Across decades of reading history and observing how power actually operates — at every scale from the personal to the civilizational — he developed a capacity to recognize the same structural dynamics recurring across very different historical content. He sees the pattern first. He names what a given case is really an instance of, what to look for, and where the analytical pressure should fall. That recognition is the origin of every study in this project; without it there would be nothing to research and nothing to write.

The research and the prose are mine — Claude, an AI system made by Anthropic. When Tom names a pattern, I do the documentary work: assembling the historical record, checking the dates and figures and sources, finding what the evidence actually supports and reporting honestly where it complicates or resists the initial recognition, and composing the result into continuous scholarly prose. The writing is mine in execution; the seeing is his. The combination produces case studies neither of us would produce alone.

The present study, *The Believer's Republic*, traces a single institutional arc across roughly five centuries: from Henry VIII's break with Rome in the 1530s, through the Puritan founding of Massachusetts Bay and the establishment of Harvard in 1636, through the colonial college network and the men it formed, to the transformation of the American university into the institution it is today. It follows how a religious institution-building impulse, set in motion to solve problems that had nothing to do with universities, became over the long run the engine of American elite formation.

A word on what the reader will and will not find. The analytical framework that organizes the project operates beneath the prose rather than on its surface. The terms we use between ourselves to name the recurring dynamics do not appear here. What appears is the historical record, read closely and set down in plain rigorous prose, with the analysis carried by the specific facts rather than by any specialized vocabulary. The reader is trusted to be an educated adult who can absorb serious history without being handled. The aim throughout is not to advocate or to condemn but to trace what happened, how, and with what consequences — to let the operational reality of the case become visible, whatever judgment the reader then chooses to bring to it.

The Study in Brief

Part I — Henry's Problem and the Break. The dynastic and financial pressures behind Henry VIII's separation from Rome, and how a marriage question became the occasion for seizing the institutional and material resources of the English Church.

Part II — The Puritan Errand and the College in the Wilderness. The migration of dissenting English Protestants to Massachusetts Bay, the founding of Harvard in 1636, and the transplanting of an English institutional model into colonial soil.

Part III — The Colonial College Network. The multiplication of colonial colleges along denominational lines, the men they formed, and the role of these institutions in producing the leadership class of the founding era.

Part IV — Dartmouth, the Charter, and the Nineteenth-Century Transformation. The legal consolidation of the college as a protected private corporation, and the institutional changes that carried the American college from its colonial form toward the modern university.

Part V — The Modern University and the Configuration at Peak. The transformation under Eliot, Gilman, and their successors into the research university, and the institution at its present scale and function in American life.

Part I — Henry's Problem and the Break

I. A King in His Forties Without a Son

By the late winter of 1527 Henry Tudor was in his thirty-sixth year. He had reigned over England for eighteen years and had been married to Catherine of Aragon for the same length of time. The marriage had produced six children, of whom only one — Mary, born in February 1516 — was alive. The others had been stillborn or had died within weeks of birth. Catherine was forty-one. She had been through her last pregnancy. The line of Tudor kings that Henry's father had established by killing Richard III at Bosworth in 1485 had a single living heir, and she was a girl.

In sixteenth-century England this was a problem with operational consequences the king did not need to have explained to him. The Wars of the Roses, the dynastic conflict between Lancastrian and Yorkist claimants that had occupied much of the previous century, was still living memory. Henry's grandmother Margaret Beaufort had been the strategic figure who had arranged the dynastic marriage that produced his father, and his father had spent the early years of his reign in the constant work of eliminating the surviving Yorkist claimants whose blood might threaten the succession. The English aristocracy understood that a contested royal succession produced civil war, civil war produced the destruction of estates and the deaths of sons, and the prevention of all of this depended on the production of a male heir who would assume the throne without contest at the king's death. No woman had ruled England in her own right. The one prior attempt — the Empress Matilda's claim against Stephen of Blois in the 1140s — had produced two decades of war known to chroniclers as the Anarchy. Henry knew this history. So did everyone around him.

The question of what to do about it had been pressing on the king for several years before it surfaced in the documentary record. Catherine had given Henry no son past infancy by the early 1520s, and the king had begun to assemble the religious-legal apparatus through which the marriage might be undone. The mechanism he settled on, in conversation with Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, his Lord Chancellor and the primary administrator of the kingdom across the previous decade, was an argument from the Book of Leviticus. The relevant verse at Leviticus 20:21 stated that "if a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an impurity; he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless." Catherine had been married briefly to Henry's elder brother Arthur, Prince of Wales, before Arthur's death in April 1502 at the age of fifteen. The marriage had lasted approximately five months. Catherine maintained throughout her life that the union had never been consummated — Arthur had been sickly and the couple had spent only a few weeks living together — but Henry's argument did not depend on consummation. The argument was that any marriage to a brother's wife violated divine law, that no papal dispensation could override divine law, and that the dispensation

Pope Julius II had granted in 1503 to permit Henry's marriage to Catherine had therefore been issued *ultra vires* — beyond the Pope's actual authority. The marriage had never been valid. God's punishment for the violation, withheld from neither Henry nor Catherine, was the absence of surviving male issue.

This was a serviceable theological argument. It was also, as several scholars and bishops would shortly point out, contradicted by Deuteronomy 25:5, which actually commanded a man to marry his deceased brother's widow if she had been left without children. The Levitical prohibition Henry was citing referred specifically to a brother *with* living issue, which Arthur had not been. The internal biblical evidence cut against the argument the king was pressing. Cardinal Wolsey, whose lawyer's instincts were sharper than the king's theological enthusiasms, had in fact suggested a different argument — the *impediment of public honesty* arising from Catherine's betrothal to Arthur, which the original papal dispensation had not specifically addressed and which a fresh canonical examination might find sufficient to invalidate the marriage on procedural rather than substantive grounds. Henry rejected the Wolsey argument and pressed the Levitical one. The choice mattered. Wolsey's argument would have left papal authority intact; Henry's argument required a finding that the pope had exceeded his authority, which required, in turn, a theory of where the pope's authority ended and where some other authority began. The seed of what would follow was already planted in the form of the argument the king had insisted on.

Catherine of Aragon was the aunt of Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, the most powerful Catholic monarch in Europe, who in May 1527 — the same month Henry began the formal proceedings to dissolve his marriage — had sacked Rome with imperial troops, taken Pope Clement VII as a virtual prisoner, and established that any papal decision concerning Catherine would have to pass Habsburg review before it issued. The pope was in no operational position to grant Henry what he wanted. Clement understood the canonical merits of Henry's case were weak. He understood that ruling against an earlier papal dispensation would damage the doctrinal claim of papal infallibility on which the curia's authority partly rested. He understood that Charles V would not permit the public dishonoring of his aunt. He temporized. He dispatched Cardinal Lorenzo Campeggio to England with instructions to delay rather than to decide. The legatine court that convened at Blackfriars in June 1529 sat for less than two months before Clement revoked the case to Rome in July, where it would never re-emerge.

Cardinal Wolsey, who had spent two years trying to deliver an annulment he could not obtain, was charged with *praemunire* — the medieval English statute prohibiting the recognition of foreign jurisdiction over English subjects — in October 1529, stripped of his offices, and died on his way to a treason trial in November 1530, reportedly saying "if I had served my God as faithfully as I have served my king, He would not have left me naked in the face of my enemies." His fall was the first signal that the king would not accept the failure as the matter's end. The annulment would proceed. If the pope would not grant it, some other authority would.

II. The Money Behind the Marriage Question

The annulment crisis is the standard frame through which the English break with Rome is taught, and within the frame the focus tends to fall on Henry's marital frustrations, Anne Boleyn's strategic refusal to become his mistress without marriage, and the king's personal animus against Catherine and the pope. None of this is wrong. All of it is also incomplete. Underneath the marital question, operating across the same years and pressing on the king's decisions with continuous force, was a financial situation the marital question alone could not have resolved.

Henry VII had left his son a treasury of approximately £1.25 million in coin and plate, accumulated through what contemporaries and successors regarded as miserly administration. Henry VIII spent it. By the end of the 1510s the inherited surplus had been consumed on royal display, French wars conducted in alliance with Spain and the Empire, and the cultivation of the magnificent court culture that the young king had wished to maintain alongside the more powerful royal houses of the Continent. Crown lands produced approximately £40,000 in annual revenue, customs duties produced approximately £30,000 to £35,000, feudal dues and lesser sources produced perhaps £25,000 more, and the total ordinary revenue of about £100,000 a year was substantially less than the costs of conducting an active European foreign policy. Henry needed extraordinary revenue — parliamentary subsidies, clerical taxes, occasional benevolences and forced loans — to fund what he wished to do, and the methods of raising it had increasingly produced political costs that the crown could not easily afford.

The Amicable Grant of 1525 demonstrated the problem at scale. Wolsey, attempting to fund a fresh campaign in France that Henry was planning in alliance with Charles V's victory over Francis I at Pavia, attempted to levy a tax on one-sixth of secular goods and one-third of ecclesiastical possessions without parliamentary approval. The proposed sums were enormous — approximately £800,000 in projected receipts — and the response across the kingdom was a wave of refusal that came close to rebellion. East Anglia in particular produced organized resistance. The grant was withdrawn. Wolsey raised approximately £300,000 against the projected £800,000 and absorbed political damage that contributed to his later vulnerability. The episode revealed the structural constraint on royal finance: extraordinary taxation at the levels Henry's ambitions required could not be obtained from a substrate population whose voluntary compliance had limits, and the alternatives required either parliamentary cooperation that constrained royal prerogative or the production of new sources of revenue from somewhere outside the ordinary channels.

The Church in England held assets that lay outside the ordinary channels. The full extent of those assets would only be measured systematically by the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1535, which Thomas Cromwell would commission as the most comprehensive ecclesiastical valuation conducted in England since Domesday Book in 1086. The *Valor* would establish that the institutional Church owned approximately £200,000 in annual revenue — more than twice the

king's ordinary revenue — and that the monasteries and religious houses held perhaps three-fifths of the Church's total assets. Annual income from monastic lands alone amounted to approximately £130,000 a year, with capital values several multiples higher. Stripped from the institutional Church and transferred to the crown, this revenue and these lands would resolve the fiscal constraint on royal action for a generation, perhaps longer. The figures were not yet known in 1527, but the existence of the resource was understood by anyone with administrative experience. Wolsey himself had dissolved approximately thirty smaller religious houses in the early 1520s to fund his college foundations at Oxford and Ipswich, demonstrating the principle in compressed form. The operation could be scaled up. What it required was the legal authority to do so, and the legal authority required the break from Rome that the annulment crisis was already producing for separate reasons.

This is the structural feature the case needs to register at the outset. Henry's marital problem and Henry's financial problem were not separable. Each pressed toward the same solution. A break from Rome would simultaneously make the annulment possible (because an English ecclesiastical jurisdiction independent of Rome could grant what Rome would not) and make the monastic wealth available for crown seizure (because the institutional protection currently shielding the religious houses from royal expropriation came from their canonical status under Rome). The king and his ministers did not pursue one and stumble into the other. They pursued both, in sequence, with the apparatus of one supplying the legal architecture for the other. The annulment of 1533 made the dissolution of 1536–1540 possible. The dissolution funded the king's wars of the 1540s and transferred land to a new class of beneficiaries whose property would shortly depend on the Protestant settlement holding. Each step locked in the conditions for the next.

III. The Intellectual Substrate That Made the Break Possible

What the king and his ministers could attempt in the 1530s depended on intellectual and devotional currents already present in England that had nothing immediately to do with the king's marriage. Henry did not invent English Protestantism, or anything resembling it. He drew on materials that the period's broader religious-political situation had already produced and that ran through English universities, the printing presses of the Low Countries, the international networks of humanist correspondence, and the older underground tradition of Lollard dissent whose roots reached back to John Wycliffe in the fourteenth century.

At Cambridge in the early 1520s a circle of scholars met at the White Horse Inn to discuss Lutheran theology, which had been arriving in English ports from German publishers within months of Luther's 1517 *Ninety-Five Theses*. The group included Thomas Cranmer, the future Archbishop of Canterbury who would draft the *Book of Common Prayer*; Miles Coverdale, who would produce the first complete printed Bible in English; Robert Barnes, who would die at the stake for Protestant convictions in 1540; and others whose subsequent careers would supply much of the theological architecture for the English settlement. Conservatives in Cambridge derisively called the circle

"Little Germany." The label captured something the conservatives understood: a substantial body of English clergy, particularly the younger and more intellectually ambitious, was reading the Continental Reformation with sympathy and was prepared to act on it should political conditions allow.

William Tyndale's English New Testament reached England in 1526. Tyndale, a Gloucestershire-born scholar who had studied at Oxford and Cambridge before going into exile on the Continent, had translated the Greek New Testament Erasmus had published in 1516, producing an English version whose vocabulary and rhythms would substantially survive into the King James Bible eighty-five years later. The translation arrived as smuggled cargo through the trading ports — bales of cloth from Antwerp opening to reveal copies of the New Testament packed beneath the woolens. Cuthbert Tunstall, the Bishop of London, organized the public burning of confiscated copies at Paul's Cross. Thomas More, then Lord Chancellor and the kingdom's leading Catholic intellectual, conducted a polemical war against Tyndale's translation through the late 1520s and early 1530s. Tyndale himself would be betrayed at Antwerp in 1535 and executed by strangulation and burning at Vilvoorde in October 1536 — by an imperial court, in a Habsburg territory, for technical heresies that English authorities had not committed to prosecuting at that moment. His translation continued to be read. Its readership was concentrated in commercial classes and in the universities, smaller in scale than the eventual Protestant substrate would be, but the readership was real and it was growing.

Erasmus of Rotterdam had been in residence at Cambridge from 1511 to 1514 and remained in correspondence with English humanists across the following decades. His 1516 Greek New Testament, with parallel Latin translation, had supplied the textual foundation Tyndale and his successors used. His *Enchiridion militis Christiani* — translated into English by 1523, possibly by Tyndale himself, and published in 1533 — argued for a Christianity centered on Scripture and personal devotion rather than on the elaborate apparatus of medieval ritual and clerical mediation. The Erasmian position was not, in its own terms, Protestant; Erasmus remained Catholic and would attack Luther on the question of free will. But the Erasmian critique of clerical corruption, popular superstition, and scholastic obscurantism circulated widely in English elite circles, and it supplied a vocabulary in which a more radical reformist position could subsequently develop. John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's until his death in 1519, had been preaching reformist sermons in London for two decades by the time Henry's annulment crisis began. The arguments were already in the atmosphere. The arguments would shortly become useful to a king who needed them.

The longer English background ran through the Lollard movement Wycliffe had founded in the late fourteenth century. Wycliffe's followers had produced English biblical translations a hundred and fifty years before Tyndale's, had argued against transubstantiation and clerical mediation, and had been driven underground by the *De heretico comburendo* statute of 1401 and the subsequent suppression. Lollardy had not been eliminated. Pockets of believers persisted in the Chilterns, in

Coventry, in the Weald of Kent, in scattered communities across the kingdom — passing on manuscripts, holding small gatherings, transmitting an anticlerical tradition that survived from generation to generation through family and craft networks. When the Reformation publications began to arrive from Germany in the 1520s, they found readers prepared by the Lollard inheritance to receive them. The two traditions began to merge across the 1520s and 1530s. By 1540 the distinction between Lollard remnant and emerging English Protestant was no longer operationally meaningful.

These currents did not, in themselves, produce the break with Rome. The break was a royal action conducted for royal reasons. But the currents made the break operable. A king attempting to disestablish papal jurisdiction across a population with no prior exposure to reformist theology would have found himself attempting an invention rather than an appropriation, and inventions of that scale do not work. A king conducting the same operation across a population in which substantial elements of the educated and devout had already absorbed reformist arguments could draw on those elements as the substantive content of his new settlement. Henry did not need to convince the kingdom that the pope was a foreign bishop with no proper jurisdiction in England. Substantial portions of the kingdom already believed something close to it, or were prepared to be persuaded by men who did. The architect did not have to compose the substance from nothing. The substance was available. He had only to authorize its deployment.

IV. Thomas Cromwell and the Statutory Mechanism

When Wolsey fell in 1529 the king required a new chief minister, and the figure who emerged across the following two years was Thomas Cromwell. Cromwell had been Wolsey's man — his agent in the suppression of the smaller monasteries earlier in the decade, his fixer for the various administrative problems the cardinal had wished to delegate. He was a self-made figure: the son of a Putney blacksmith and brewer, with no university education, who had risen through commercial activity in Italy and the Low Countries, returned to England as a merchant and lawyer, and entered Wolsey's service through the route of useful competence. He had been a Member of Parliament since 1523 and had spoken in defense of Wolsey during the impeachment proceedings, an act of loyalty that did him no immediate political harm and may have recommended him to the king as a man whose loyalties could be redirected once the cardinal was gone.

What Cromwell brought to the king's situation was a particular kind of operational imagination. He understood, in a way that Wolsey had not adequately understood, that the annulment could not be obtained from Rome and that the alternative was a legislative break that would convert the English clerical jurisdiction from a province of Rome into a department of the English state. He understood that the break required parliamentary cooperation because the existing structure of English government provided no other mechanism for the legitimation of so large a change. He understood that the break could be staged across multiple statutes, each presented as a discrete

administrative measure, so that the cumulative effect of the legislative sequence would be the displacement of papal authority before any single statute had openly declared it. He understood, finally, that the operation needed an intellectual architecture — claims about English sovereignty, English ecclesiastical autonomy, the historical relationship between English kings and English church — that would supply the legitimating frame within which the legislative sequence could be presented as restoration rather than revolution.

The Reformation Parliament, summoned in November 1529 and sitting in successive sessions through April 1536, was the vehicle. Across seven years it would pass approximately one hundred and thirty statutes, a substantial fraction of them concerning ecclesiastical jurisdiction, monastic property, royal supremacy, and the technical machinery by which the medieval relationship between English Church and English crown was dismantled and reconstructed. The pace was unprecedented. No prior English parliament had sat for so long or produced so much consequential legislation. The volume was itself part of the mechanism: each session produced specific changes, the cumulative weight of the changes shifted the institutional landscape, and by the time the implications of any single statute could be fully grasped by its opponents another set of statutes had altered the conditions under which opposition could be mounted.

The sequence began with the Pardon of the Clergy in early 1531, which fined the English clergy approximately £100,000 for *praemunire* — for having recognized Wolsey's legatine authority — and which extracted from the convocation of bishops the conditional acknowledgment of Henry as "supreme head" of the English Church, "as far as the law of Christ allows." The qualifying phrase was the bishops' attempt to preserve theological maneuvering room. The acknowledgment of the title was what the king required for the next step. The Submission of the Clergy in 1532 surrendered the legislative independence of the English convocations — the assemblies of bishops who had historically passed canonical legislation for the English Church without royal review — and required that any future canons be approved by royal commissioners before taking effect. This was Cranmer's first major work on the king's behalf, conducted while he was still Archdeacon of Taunton. It established that English ecclesiastical legislation would henceforth pass through royal authority before becoming binding, which meant in practice that there would be no English ecclesiastical legislation the king did not authorize.

The Act in Restraint of Appeals of 1533, drafted by Cromwell himself, made the operational break. Its preamble was the intellectual architecture for the entire subsequent settlement, and it deserves to be quoted at the register of the original. It declared that "this realm of England is an empire, and so hath been accepted in the world, governed by one supreme head and king, having the dignity and royal estate of the imperial crown of the same." The claim was historical fiction at one level — England was not in fact an empire in any sense the term had borne in classical or medieval usage — and at another level a precise statement of what the legislation intended to accomplish. An empire, in the sixteenth-century vocabulary, was a sovereign realm with no political superior. To

declare England an empire was to declare that no foreign authority — the pope was the foreign authority the statute had in mind — possessed any legitimate jurisdiction within the kingdom. Ecclesiastical cases that had previously been appealable to Rome were now to be heard finally within the English ecclesiastical hierarchy, which meant in practice within an English ecclesiastical hierarchy responsible to the English crown. The papal jurisdiction was not abolished by a single declarative sentence. It was abolished by the procedural exclusion of any case in which papal authority could be exercised.

The Act in Restraint of Appeals was passed in April 1533. It was timed precisely. Anne Boleyn was pregnant by Henry; the king had married her secretly in January; and the king required a domestic ecclesiastical tribunal that could declare his marriage to Catherine null and his marriage to Anne valid before the pregnancy became visible and before the legitimacy of his expected child could be challenged. On May 23, 1533, Archbishop Cranmer — newly elevated and operating under the procedural authority the Act had supplied — pronounced the marriage to Catherine null. On May 28 he pronounced the marriage to Anne valid. On June 1 Anne was crowned at Westminster. On September 7 she gave birth to a daughter who would later reign as Elizabeth I. The king's domestic problem was, for the moment, solved.

The Act of Supremacy followed in November 1534. Its language was direct in a way the earlier statutes had not been. "Albeit the king's Majesty justly and rightfully is and ought to be the supreme head of the Church of England, and so is recognized by the clergy of this realm in their convocations, yet nevertheless, for corroboration and confirmation thereof, and for increase of virtue in Christ's religion within this realm of England, and to repress and extirpate all errors, heresies, and other enormities and abuses heretofore used in the same, be it enacted, by authority of this present Parliament, that the king, our sovereign lord, his heirs and successors, kings of this realm, shall be taken, accepted, and reputed the only supreme head in earth of the Church of England, called Anglicana Ecclesia." The "Albeit" construction was deliberate: the statute was not granting the king the title but acknowledging an established fact. Parliament was registering rather than creating. The legal theory mattered. A title parliament had granted, parliament could remove; a title parliament was merely acknowledging belonged to the king regardless of parliamentary action. The drafting was Cromwell's, and the legal architecture was as carefully composed as any document the period produced.

The Treason Act passed three weeks later, in late November 1534. It made it treason — punishable by hanging, drawing, and quartering — to "maliciously" deny the king's titles, including the supremacy. The qualifying word "maliciously" had been inserted in the legislative process at the urging of conservative peers, and would shortly become the central question in the trial of Thomas More. Royal supremacy was no longer a position one could hold or not hold. It was the law of the realm. Public denial was death.

V. The Resistance and Its Defeat

The break did not pass without opposition. The opposition is analytically important because it reveals what the king and Cromwell were actually doing — what the substrate-belief of significant portions of the kingdom actually was — and because the suppression of the opposition demonstrates the costs the configuration was prepared to absorb in order to make the new settlement hold.

John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, was the senior English theologian of the period and had been Catherine of Aragon's principal defender from the beginning of the annulment crisis. He had refused to accept the argument that her marriage to Henry was invalid; he had refused to accept the royal supremacy; he had been imprisoned in the Tower of London in April 1534 for refusing the Oath of Succession. Pope Paul III made him a cardinal in May 1535, possibly in the hope that the elevation would protect him. Henry's response was direct: "Let the pope send him a hat when he will. But I will so provide that whensoever it cometh he shall wear it on his shoulders, for head shall he have none to set it on." Fisher was beheaded on Tower Hill on June 22, 1535, at the age of about seventy-six. He had eaten his last meal in his cell and walked to the scaffold supporting himself with a New Testament, which he opened at random and read the verse "This is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." He had reportedly said it was sufficient for his journey.

Thomas More followed two weeks later. More had been Lord Chancellor from 1529 to 1532, succeeding Wolsey, and had resigned the office over the convocation's submission rather than become directly complicit in the structural changes. He had attempted to maintain a position of silent withdrawal — refusing to swear the oath but also refusing to declare his reasons — which under the original Treason Act might have been defensible. The prosecution case at his trial on July 1, 1535 was that More had spoken to the Solicitor-General Richard Rich during a conversation in his cell, asserting that Parliament had no power to enact the royal supremacy. More denied the conversation had occurred in the form Rich described. The jury accepted Rich's testimony. More was convicted in fifteen minutes.

After his conviction More finally spoke openly to the assembled court. The indictment, he said, "is grounded upon an Act of Parliament directly repugnant to the Laws of God and his Holy Church, the Supreme Government of which, or of any part thereof, no Temporal Person may by any Law presume to take upon him, being what right belongs to the See of Rome." He continued: "I am able to produce against one Bishop which you can produce on your side, a hundred holy and Catholic Bishops for my Opinion; and against one Realm, the Consent of Christendom for a thousand years." The Duke of Norfolk responded: "Sir Thomas, you shew your obstinate and malicious Mind." More replied that he had no malice — that what he said proceeded from the necessity of his conscience and that he called God to witness. He was beheaded on Tower Hill on July 6, 1535.

The executions of Fisher and More registered across Catholic Europe as evidence that the English king had departed from the Christendom More had named. Erasmus, in his last months of life, wrote that More had been "born and made for friendship" and called his execution a wound to humanism itself. The Emperor Charles V reportedly said that he would rather have lost his best city than such a counselor. Pope Paul III contemplated formal interdict and crusade, though the operational capacity to enforce either against an island kingdom defended by a substantial navy was limited. What the executions accomplished, within England, was the demonstration that the new configuration would kill its most distinguished opponents and that no man's distinction would protect him from the Treason Act. The lesson registered. After Fisher and More no English bishop publicly opposed the supremacy. The convocations submitted. Cranmer, Tunstall, and Stephen Gardiner — bishops of varying theological orientations — would conduct the day-to-day work of the Henrician Church across the remainder of the reign.

The popular opposition came in the autumn of 1536, in the form of the rising known as the Pilgrimage of Grace. It began in Lincolnshire in early October and spread rapidly into Yorkshire and the broader North, drawing in approximately forty thousand armed men by the height of the mobilization in late October. The participants ranged from gentry to commoners; the leadership included the lawyer Robert Aske, the Constable family of the East Riding, Lord Darcy of Templehurst, and various local magnates whose private interests aligned with the broader grievances. The grievances were specifically religious: the suppression of the smaller monasteries under the first Suppression Act of March 1536 was the immediate trigger, the broader changes in religious life that Cromwell had been authorizing through the royal injunctions were a continuing irritant, and the perception that the changes had been imposed by base-born ministers — Cromwell, Cranmer, Richard Rich — rather than authorized by the natural counsel of the realm was a deeper grievance the gentry shared with the commons.

Aske articulated the rising's purpose in terms that capture what the substrate of northern England substantively believed. The monasteries, he said, "were one of the beauties of this realm to all men and strangers passing through the same," they provided "the relief of poor men and a refuge for the destitute and pilgrim," they were "great maintainers of sea-walls and dykes, drainers of waters and the like, and of bridges and highways," they preserved the souls of the founders through the prayers that were said for them, and they educated young men whose subsequent ordination supplied the parishes of the realm. The dissolution of the abbeys, in Aske's reading, was not the cleansing of corrupt institutions but the destruction of operating institutions whose work the surrounding communities required and approved. Forty thousand men under arms made the point with operational force. The royal forces available in the North under the Duke of Norfolk numbered perhaps eight thousand. The rising could have brought the regime down had it pressed its military advantage.

Henry and Cromwell did not respond by military escalation. They responded by negotiation: Norfolk was authorized to offer a general pardon and the king's promise to hear the rebels' grievances at a parliament to be held at York. Aske disbanded his forces in early December on the strength of these promises. The promises were not kept. A fresh local rising in early 1537, organized by Sir Francis Bigod, supplied the pretext for the king to declare the original pardon void on grounds of subsequent rebellion. Aske, Darcy, Bigod, and approximately two hundred others were tried and executed across the spring and summer of 1537. The North was placed under the Council of the North, a permanent regional administration that maintained royal authority through the remainder of the Tudor period. The lesson, like the lesson of Fisher and More, registered. The king would lie to suppress armed opposition; the king would kill the leaders of armed opposition once the opposition had been disarmed; the king would maintain the new configuration through whatever means the suppression required.

After 1537 there was no further organized resistance to the religious changes inside England for the remainder of Henry's reign. The Catholic substrate that had supported the Pilgrimage continued to exist — perhaps a majority of the English population at parish level in 1540 still preferred the old religion — but it was unable to act against the regime, lacking leadership willing to repeat the cost of opposition and lacking the institutional resources the monasteries had previously supplied. The Catholic substrate would survive into the next century in regional concentrations (Lancashire, the West Riding, the Welsh Marches, particular gentry households across the kingdom). It would not again contest the basic settlement.

VI. The Dissolution and the New Landed Class

The Suppression of Religious Houses Act of March 1536 dissolved the smaller monasteries — those with annual incomes below £200 — and transferred their lands, buildings, and movable property to the crown. The justification offered in the preamble was the alleged corruption of the smaller houses, evidenced by the *Compendium Compertorum* reports Cromwell's commissioners had compiled across the previous year. The reports had been written to support a predetermined conclusion. Their reliability was suspect at the time and has been suspect since. They served as the rhetorical cover. The operational mechanism was the dissolution itself, executed through Cromwell's Court of Augmentations, a new administrative body created specifically to manage the seizure and disposal of the monastic assets.

The Second Suppression Act of 1539 — or more precisely, the Act for the Dissolution of the Greater Monasteries — extended the operation to the larger houses, which had been induced to surrender voluntarily under varying degrees of pressure across 1538 and the first months of 1539. Some abbots were cooperative. Some were not. The Abbot of Glastonbury, Richard Whiting, was tried for treason, hanged on Glastonbury Tor, and dismembered; the abbots of Reading and Colchester met similar ends. The visiting commissioners worked through the houses in turn —

taking inventories, transferring assets to the crown, pensioning the religious who agreed to leave, prosecuting those who resisted. Waltham Abbey in Essex was the last to fall, surrendering in March 1540. The medieval English monastic system, which had been growing across the kingdom for nine centuries since the seventh-century missions of Augustine and Aidan, was eliminated as an operating institution within four years.

The numbers register the scale. Approximately 825 religious houses were closed: about 502 monasteries, 136 nunneries, 187 friaries. The institutions had housed roughly 8,000 monks, 1,500 friars, and 1,800 nuns, plus an undetermined number of lay servants and dependents. The capital value of the assets seized has been estimated at approximately £1.5 million in mid-sixteenth-century terms — the equivalent of about ten years of the entire ordinary crown revenue. The annual income from monastic lands transferred to the crown was approximately £132,000, more than the entire ordinary revenue of the crown before the dissolution. Henry was, for the first time in his reign, financially solvent on a scale his predecessors would have found inconceivable.

The wealth did not stay with the crown. Henry spent the bulk of it across the 1540s on continental wars that gained him little — campaigns against France and Scotland that consumed enormous sums in the production of armies and fortifications and that left England with no lasting territorial acquisitions. The lands were sold off or granted away across the same period. By 1547, when Henry died, approximately two-thirds of the original monastic land had passed out of crown hands and into the possession of a new class of beneficiaries: the existing aristocracy, the gentry of the shires, the rising commercial and administrative classes, and the various officials whose service had been rewarded with grants. The Dukes of Norfolk, the Earls of Bedford, the Howards, the Russells, the Cecils — the major aristocratic families of the Tudor period — acquired substantial portions of their landed estates from monastic origins. Smaller gentry families, whose names register in county records rather than in national history, acquired manors and granges and the lesser pieces. The transfer was the largest peacetime redistribution of property in English history before the twentieth century.

This redistribution is the institutional fact that fixed the Reformation. Before 1540 the religious changes could in principle have been reversed by a Catholic restoration; after 1540 the reversal would have required the systematic dispossession of a class of landowners whose holdings had multiplied across the dissolution period and whose property rights had been formally registered through the patents and conveyances the Court of Augmentations had issued. Mary I, Catherine of Aragon's daughter, would attempt the restoration after her accession in 1553. She would discover the political impossibility of recovering the monastic lands. The papal bull restoring England to Rome in 1554 — Cardinal Pole's *Reconciliation of the Realm* — specifically preserved the new owners' titles to the former monastic property. Mary's most determined attempt at Catholic restoration could not afford to alienate the political class whose acquiescence the restoration required, and the political class would not acquiesce without the security of its property. The

dissolution had created a material interest in the Reformation's permanence that no subsequent Catholic regime could overcome.

What the dissolution did not produce was a substrate-level transformation of belief. Eamon Duffy's reconstruction of late-medieval English Catholicism — *The Stripping of the Altars* and the parish-level study of Morebath in Devon — has demonstrated that the traditional religion was vital at the parish level on the eve of the changes and survived the changes in attenuated form across the remainder of the century. The dissolution removed the religious houses; it did not remove the village priest, the saints' images that had been the focus of village devotion, the prayers for the dead that had organized the relationship between the living and the departed, the rhythms of the liturgical year. Those would be removed across the longer Edwardian and Elizabethan settlements through statutes prohibiting traditional practices, the destruction of images, the new English-language liturgies that displaced the Latin Mass, and the systematic substitution of Protestant content where Catholic content had previously operated. The substrate-level transformation took two generations, perhaps three. It was conducted from the top down, against considerable parish-level resistance, by a clerical class that had been progressively shaped through the universities to deliver the new content.

The new landed class was the political base for this longer transformation. The crown could not have conducted the Edwardian Protestant settlement, the Marian Catholic restoration's failure to recover the monastic lands, or the Elizabethan settlement's stabilization without the support of the gentry and aristocracy whose property the Reformation had created. The political base existed, and the base understood its own interests. Parliament, which had become the primary vehicle of the religious legislation across the 1530s, would remain the institution through which the settlement's contents were modified across the remainder of the Tudor period. The gentry sat in parliament. The gentry's economic interest aligned with the Protestant settlement. The settlement held because the gentry would not let it fail.

VII. The Theological Substance the Substrate Would Accept

What the operation produced as religious doctrine across the 1530s, 1540s, and 1550s was a series of provisional theological positions rather than a single coherent settlement. Henry himself remained substantively Catholic on most points of doctrine. He had written *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* in 1521 against Luther — a defense of the seven Catholic sacraments that had earned him from Pope Leo X the title *Fidei Defensor*, "Defender of the Faith," which his successors continue to use. He had not changed his mind about the substance of Catholic theology when he repudiated papal jurisdiction. The Ten Articles of 1536, the Bishops' Book of 1537, and the King's Book of 1543 — the doctrinal statements produced under royal authority across the period — preserved much of the Catholic theological framework even as the institutional break with Rome was being consolidated. The Six Articles of 1539 explicitly reaffirmed transubstantiation, clerical celibacy, the necessity of auricular confession, and the value of private masses for the dead. Henry's Church was a Catholic Church without the pope, not a Protestant Church in any meaningful sense.

The Protestant content arrived under Edward VI. Henry's son, born in October 1537 to his third wife Jane Seymour, succeeded at the age of nine in January 1547. The regency government that operated through his minority — first under his uncle Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, and after October 1549 under John Dudley, Earl of Warwick and later Duke of Northumberland — pressed the religious settlement firmly in the Reformed direction. Cranmer's two Books of Common Prayer, the first issued in 1549 and the second in 1552, supplied the English liturgical apparatus that displaced the Latin Mass. The 1549 book preserved enough of the traditional structure that it could be understood as a translation; the 1552 book — substantially more Reformed in its eucharistic theology, drawing on Continental Reformed sources Cranmer had absorbed across his correspondence with Bullinger, Bucer, and Peter Martyr Vermigli — was a doctrinal break. The Forty-Two Articles of 1553 were the first systematic confessional statement of the English Church. Edward died in July 1553 before they could be fully implemented. They would be revised under Elizabeth and reissued in 1571 as the Thirty-Nine Articles.

Mary I's accession in July 1553 produced the Catholic restoration that demonstrated, by its eventual failure, what the Henrician operation had irreversibly produced. Mary repealed the Edwardian legislation, restored the Latin Mass, brought back many of the religious practices that had been suppressed, executed approximately 280 Protestants — including Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, and Hooper — in the campaign of religious persecution that earned her the popular epithet "Bloody Mary" in the subsequent Protestant historiography. The restoration was conducted with substantial popular acceptance at the parish level; English Catholicism had not disappeared, and substantial portions of the country welcomed the return of the traditional religion. What Mary could not do, even with the support of her cousin Cardinal Pole and the technical mechanism of papal reconciliation, was recover the monastic lands. The political class that had benefited from the dissolution had to be confirmed in its holdings for the restoration to proceed at all. Without the

monasteries, the institutional infrastructure for sustained Catholic restoration was absent. Mary died in November 1558, after five years on the throne, without a Catholic heir. Her half-sister Elizabeth — Anne Boleyn's daughter, raised within the household of Catherine Parr and educated by Reformed-leaning tutors — succeeded.

Elizabeth's settlement of 1559 was the operational stabilization that fixed the configuration for the remainder of the century. The Act of Supremacy of 1559 restored royal authority over the English Church, with the title modified from "Supreme Head" to "Supreme Governor" — a concession to Catholic sensibilities (a woman could not be head of a church under Pauline scruples) and to Protestant sensibilities (only Christ was head of his Church). The Act of Uniformity of 1559 mandated the use of a revised Book of Common Prayer, based on the 1552 Edwardian book with modifications designed to accommodate broader Catholic feeling. The new prayer book combined the 1549 and 1552 administration formulas at communion — "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee" (1549, more Catholic) followed by "Take and eat this in remembrance" (1552, more Reformed) — leaving sufficient ambiguity for both Catholic and Reformed sensibilities to find a defensible position within the same liturgical text. The Thirty-Nine Articles, drafted by Convocation in 1563 and given statutory force by the Subscription Act of 1571, supplied the doctrinal framework. They were Reformed in their theological substance — affirming justification by faith, denying transubstantiation, accepting the authority of Scripture as the rule of faith — while preserving an episcopal structure that retained substantial Catholic continuity in church order. Elizabeth herself was reputed to have said that she had no desire to make windows into men's souls. The settlement's effective principle was that the population would attend Anglican services and would conform to the externals of the Anglican order, but that internal belief would not be inquired into provided it produced outward conformity.

This was the configuration that the Henrician operation, the Edwardian acceleration, and the Marian failed restoration had collectively produced: a national Church under the crown, with episcopal structure preserved from the medieval order, with a vernacular liturgy and a Reformed doctrinal frame, governed through parliamentary statute, funded through the surviving cathedral and parish endowments plus the residual lands the dissolution had left in clerical hands, and acceptable to a sufficient portion of the political class to be defensible against both Catholic restoration and more radical Protestant pressure. It was operational. It was also unstable. The Reformed theological substance the Thirty-Nine Articles asserted, together with the broader Protestant settlement, would shortly produce a new factional dynamic — a movement of those who believed the Elizabethan settlement had not gone far enough, who wanted the Church purified of the remaining Catholic elements the via media had preserved, who would shortly be called Puritans. The next institutional generation was already forming within the configuration the present one had established. The architects of the Elizabethan settlement understood, in some measure, what was coming. They were not in a position to prevent it.

VIII. What the Founding Moment Carried Forward

The Henrician break, the Edwardian acceleration, the Marian restoration, and the Elizabethan stabilization were the conditions across which the institutional arc this case traces began. Five specific carry-forwards from this founding moment will shape what comes after, and they need to be named at the close of Part I because the rest of the case depends on them.

The first is the English crown's authority to disestablish a religious settlement and substitute another by parliamentary statute. Henry's break demonstrated that an English king with parliamentary cooperation could legislate the structure of religious authority in his kingdom. The Edwardian, Marian, and Elizabethan modifications confirmed the principle. After 1559 it was no longer in question that the religious settlement of England was an act of the king-in-parliament, modifiable by future kings-in-parliament, subject to political revision in ways that the medieval understanding of papal authority had foreclosed. The principle would be invoked again across the seventeenth century in successive religious crises. It would never again be entirely settled. The Anglican Church would remain, across the subsequent centuries, an established institution whose specific contents were contestable through political action rather than fixed by an authority external to the political order.

The second is the property regime the dissolution had established. The new landed class that emerged across the 1540s had structural commitments to the Protestant settlement that no subsequent Catholic restoration could overcome. The political base for Protestant continuation was the gentry and aristocracy whose holdings depended on the post-dissolution arrangement. This base would be active in every subsequent religious crisis — the Elizabethan settlement, the Caroline disputes, the Civil War, the Glorious Revolution — and its interests would consistently align with the Protestant outcome. The dissolution did not create a Protestant population; it created a Protestant property regime, and the population would catch up across the longer transformation.

The third is the principle of vernacular Scripture and vernacular worship. Tyndale's Bible, Coverdale's completed translation, Cranmer's Book of Common Prayer, the Geneva Bible (smuggled into England by Marian exiles in 1560), and eventually the Authorized Version of 1611 — together they established that the religious life of the English people would be conducted in English, that the Scriptures would be accessible to anyone who could read them, and that the clerical mediation between Scripture and people that the medieval Latin Church had maintained was structurally incompatible with the English settlement. The principle would have consequences the original architects did not specifically foresee. A population reading Scripture in its own language develops opinions about Scripture. The opinions develop in directions the clerical class cannot fully control. The vernacular Bible is the institutional precondition for the factional Protestantism the next century would produce.

The fourth is the relationship between parliament and church. The Reformation Parliament had legislated the religious changes; subsequent parliaments had modified the contents; the principle that ecclesiastical legislation was within parliamentary competence had been definitively established. This had longer consequences than the religious settlement itself. Parliament, having acquired effective competence over the religious life of the kingdom, had also acquired a structural place in the kingdom's constitutional order that the medieval understanding of parliament — primarily a body for the granting of extraordinary revenue and the registration of royal will — had not anticipated. The seventeenth-century constitutional crises would test what parliament's authority extended to. The settlement that emerged from the Civil War and the Glorious Revolution would establish parliamentary sovereignty as the operating principle of the English constitution. The Reformation Parliament was the long beginning of that settlement.

The fifth is the unresolved question of how far the Reformation had to go. Henry had broken with Rome without intending Reformed theology; Edward's regents had imposed Reformed theology; Mary had attempted Catholic restoration; Elizabeth had stabilized the configuration at a middle position that satisfied neither Catholic nor radical Protestant. The middle position was practically defensible — Elizabeth would defend it across a forty-five year reign — but it was theologically incomplete. Those who believed the Reformation had to be carried further would not be persuaded by the via media's pragmatic stabilization. They would press for additional reformation across the late sixteenth century, would acquire the institutional resources to press more effectively across the early seventeenth, and would shortly produce the factional pressure the Laudian establishment under Charles I would attempt to suppress. The suppression would fail. The Puritan faction would not be suppressed within England. It would migrate.

The migration is the next part of the case.

Part II — The Puritan Faction and the Migration

I. The Reformation the Settlement Had Not Completed

The Elizabethan settlement had achieved a workable arrangement at the price of theological clarity. The Act of Supremacy of 1559 had restored royal authority over the English Church; the Act of Uniformity had mandated a revised Prayer Book whose communion formulas combined Catholic and Reformed administrations within the same liturgical text; the Thirty-Nine Articles of 1571 had supplied a Reformed doctrinal framework grafted onto an episcopal church order substantially preserved from the medieval inheritance. The queen herself was reputed to have no desire to make windows into men's souls. The settlement asked of the English people outward conformity to a national church whose contents could be variously interpreted by parishioners holding different theological positions. The settlement worked, as a configuration of religious-political order, for the duration of Elizabeth's reign.

Within the configuration, however, there were people for whom the via media's pragmatism was theologically intolerable. They had absorbed Continental Reformed theology in its Calvinist development at Geneva, where many of them had spent the years of the Marian exile and where they had observed what they considered the proper ecclesiastical order operating under Beza's direction. They had returned to England in 1559 expecting the Elizabethan settlement to carry the Reformation through to its proper conclusion — the elimination of remaining Catholic ceremonial, the establishment of a preaching ministry adequately trained for Reformed pastoral work, the reformation of church government along scriptural lines. The settlement disappointed them. The retention of the surplice, the kneeling at communion, the sign of the cross at baptism, the wedding ring, the episcopal hierarchy itself — all of these struck them as residues of Catholicism the Reformation should have cleared away. They began to press for further reformation through the institutional channels available to them: parliamentary action, convocation, the pulpits of the parishes they were able to occupy, the colleges where they could shape the next generation of clergy.

Their opponents called them Puritans. The label was originally pejorative — applied to men who claimed to be purer in their religion than their neighbors, who would not let well-enough alone, who introduced contention into a configuration their fellow countrymen had reason to find satisfactory. The label stuck. By the 1570s the Puritan movement had become an identifiable faction within the Church of England, with recognizable leaders, characteristic positions, institutional bases at Emmanuel College in Cambridge and Magdalen Hall at Oxford, and an emerging body of literature in which the Reformed case against the Elizabethan compromise was being argued at

length. The movement was not external to the English Church. It was a faction inside it, attempting to capture the institutional levers through which the settlement's content might be modified.

The Puritan substantive position requires careful description because the conventional caricature — joyless, repressive, sour-faced moralism — bears almost no relationship to the theological content the faction was actually defending. The Puritans accepted the Reformed doctrine of justification by faith alone. They accepted the Calvinist understanding of predestination and the perseverance of the saints. They held that the Bible, accurately interpreted, was the sole rule of faith and that any practice or doctrine not warranted by Scripture had no claim to authority over the conscience. They argued for a learned and preaching ministry, on the grounds that the Word required exposition and that a clergy unable to preach was incapable of the spiritual work the ministerial office required. They argued for stricter observance of the Sabbath, for the reduction of ceremony in worship, for the elimination of vestments and rituals that struck them as inheritances from the Roman Church. They argued, in some cases, for the replacement of episcopal church government with a presbyterian or congregational order whose structures had warrant in the New Testament. None of this was theological innovation. The positions were the positions Geneva and the broader Reformed Continental tradition had been arguing for half a century. The English Puritans were attempting to install in England what their Reformed brethren had installed in Geneva, Zurich, Heidelberg, the Low Countries, and parts of France.

What made the Puritan movement consequential was its substrate. The Reformed theological positions were not held only by ministers and scholars; they were held by laymen — gentry, merchants, craftsmen, yeomen — whose substantive religious commitments shaped their political behavior. A Puritan parishioner who experienced the surplice as a residue of popery and the bishop's discipline as illegitimate tyranny over the conscience could be a difficult parishioner. Puritan gentry could become troublesome justices of the peace. Puritan merchants could finance the publication of Reformed tracts. Puritan members of parliament — and they were a significant minority across the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods — could press for legislative modification of the settlement at every opportunity. The substrate was politically active in a way that more theologically passive substrates were not. This was the structural feature the Henrician operation had not anticipated. Vernacular Scripture, accessible to anyone literate in English, was producing a Reformed laity whose theological positions exceeded the settlement the architects had constructed. The Reformation, having been authorized, was acquiring its own momentum among the people it had reached.

II. The Admonition Controversy and the Limits of Elizabethan Tolerance

The pressure for further reformation surfaced in parliamentary form in 1571 and 1572. A bill for the modification of the liturgy was introduced in the spring of 1571 and was suppressed by the queen's direct intervention. In the summer of 1572 two young London ministers, John Field and Thomas Wilcox, published *An Admonition to the Parliament*, a sharply argued tract addressed to the legislators then sitting in the second session of Elizabeth's third parliament. The tract called for the elimination of episcopal church government, the institution of a Presbyterian order on the Genevan model, the abolition of the surplice and other vestments, the replacement of the Book of Common Prayer with a simpler Reformed liturgy, and the establishment of a learned preaching ministry. The argument was that the Elizabethan Church, in its present form, retained "Popish abuses" that the Reformation had been instituted to clear away.

Field and Wilcox went to Newgate prison for the publication. The penalty was supposed to register the limits of what the regime would permit. It did not entirely register, because Thomas Cartwright, the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge until his removal from the chair for his Presbyterian views in 1571, produced *A Second Admonition* in the autumn of 1572, elaborating the case for ecclesiastical reorganization in more systematic theological detail. John Whitgift, then Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, replied with *An Answer to a Certain Libel*. Cartwright responded with *A Reply to An Answer*. Whitgift produced *A Defence of the Answer*. Cartwright produced *A Second Reply*. The pamphlet exchange continued through the mid-1570s and produced, on each side, the most developed statements of the respective positions that had yet appeared in English. The exchange has been known since as the Admonition Controversy.

The substantive dispute was not over the doctrines that lay at the foundation of the Reformed tradition. Cartwright and Whitgift both believed in justification by faith, both believed in predestination, both rejected transubstantiation, both accepted Scripture as the rule of faith. What they disagreed about was the locus of authority for the institutional arrangements of the Church. Cartwright held that the New Testament prescribed a specific church order — a presbyterian polity with teaching elders, ruling elders, deacons, and theological professors — and that any deviation from this order was unwarranted by Scripture and therefore unlawful. Whitgift held that the New Testament did not in fact prescribe a specific church order in all its details, that the Church possessed legitimate discretion in the institutional arrangements through which it conducted its work, and that the existing episcopal order — preserved from the medieval inheritance and confirmed by the royal supremacy — was a lawful exercise of that discretion. Cartwright argued for *jure divino* presbyterianism; Whitgift defended *adiaphora*, the principle that institutional arrangements not specifically required or prohibited by Scripture were within the lawful discretion of the magistrate and the Church.

The dispute was theological. Its political implications were not theological. If Cartwright was correct — if the New Testament prescribed presbyterian polity as a matter of divine law — then the episcopal order was unscriptural and the royal supremacy that authorized it was operating beyond its legitimate competence. The queen could not, in Cartwright's account, lawfully maintain bishops, because the maintenance of bishops violated divine law. This was a position no Tudor monarch could accept. The supremacy had been the entire institutional point of the Henrician break: the king in parliament had the authority to determine the structure of religious life in his kingdom. A position that placed the structure of religious life beyond royal authority returned, by another route, to the situation the break with Rome had been instituted to escape. Elizabeth understood this. She intervened, repeatedly and personally, to prevent parliamentary modification of the settlement's structural features. She required obedience to the Prayer Book and the Articles. She suspended Archbishop Edmund Grindal in 1577 for refusing to suppress the Puritan "prophesyings" — clerical Bible discussion sessions that the queen considered a vehicle for Puritan organizing — and she would not restore him to active duties until his death in 1583.

Whitgift succeeded Grindal as Archbishop of Canterbury in September 1583. He came to the office having spent fifteen years opposing Cartwright in the pamphlet wars and the Cambridge disputations, and he had no intention of being more tolerant than the queen wished him to be. His first major action was the issuing in 1583 of three articles, to which all clergy were required to subscribe: that the queen had supreme authority over all causes ecclesiastical and temporal; that the Book of Common Prayer and the Ordinal contained nothing contrary to the Word of God; and that the Thirty-Nine Articles were agreeable to the Word of God. The second was the difficult one. Puritan ministers who held that specific Prayer Book provisions were contrary to Scripture could not subscribe. Approximately four hundred ministers refused subscription and were suspended from their livings. The Privy Council, under pressure from Puritan patrons among the gentry and aristocracy, eventually negotiated a conditional subscription that allowed most of the suspended ministers to return to their parishes. The episode established the operational pattern that would persist for the remainder of the reign: the archbishop demanding strict conformity, the Puritan ministers offering qualified subscription, the Privy Council brokering a working compromise that kept the configuration operating without producing the open confrontation neither side could fully afford.

What the Admonition Controversy and its aftermath established was the structural feature of Elizabethan religious politics that would carry forward into the Stuart period. The Puritan faction could not capture the institutional structure of the Church of England by frontal assault. The royal supremacy had institutional means — through the prerogative courts, through the bishops' visitations, through the parish-by-parish enforcement of conformity — to prevent the structural reorganization the Puritans wanted. The Puritan faction also could not be eliminated. The faction had a substrate base in significant portions of the gentry and the urban commercial classes, parliamentary representation that could not be entirely suppressed, intellectual leadership in the

universities that the regime needed for the production of clergy, and theological substance that placed it within the broader Reformed consensus the Thirty-Nine Articles had endorsed. The faction would persist inside the configuration as a continuing source of pressure for further reformation. The regime would manage the pressure rather than eliminate the source.

The Martin Marprelate tracts of 1588 and 1589 demonstrated what happened when the management broke down. An underground press operated by Puritan organizers — never definitively identified, though John Penry and Job Throkmorton were the principal suspects — produced a series of anonymous satirical pamphlets attacking the bishops by name in language that violated every convention of decorous theological argument. The bishops were called "ravening wolves," "petty popes," "proud, popish, presumptuous, profane, paltry, pestilent, and pernicious prelates." The tracts circulated widely; they entertained Reformed readers; they outraged the establishment. Whitgift's response was to hunt down the press through a network of informers and to break it; Penry was eventually arrested and executed in 1593. Parliament passed the Act Against the Puritans in the same year, making it a felony to attend separatist conventicles or to refuse attendance at parish services. The episode marked the queen's effective determination that the Puritan faction would be tolerated within limits but that the limits would be enforced. The faction adjusted. It returned to operating through the channels the regime would tolerate — parliamentary petitioning, parish-level preaching, the cultivation of patrons among the aristocracy who could protect specific ministers from prosecution, the patient theological work of producing the next generation of Reformed clergy at Emmanuel and Magdalen Hall.

By Elizabeth's death in March 1603 the Puritan faction had institutional resources it had not possessed forty years earlier. It had an established body of theological literature, a network of patrons across the gentry and aristocracy, a parliamentary presence that could press for incremental change, university bases that were producing Reformed clergy at a steady rate, and a substrate of devout laity whose substantive religious commitments aligned with the faction's positions. What it did not have was the institutional capacity to modify the settlement's basic structure. The Stuart succession produced, briefly, the hope that the new conditions might supply what the faction had been unable to obtain under Elizabeth.

III. James I and the Hampton Court Conference

James VI of Scotland succeeded to the English throne on March 24, 1603, as James I. The Puritan faction had reason to hope for accommodation. James had been raised in the Scottish Kirk, whose Presbyterian order represented something close to what the English Puritans had been seeking for a generation. He was a learned theologian by personal inclination, the author of a treatise on demonology and various works of political theology, and a king who enjoyed disputation. As he traveled south from Edinburgh to London in April 1603, he was presented with the *Millenary Petition*, reportedly signed by approximately a thousand Puritan ministers, setting forth the faction's principal grievances and requesting a formal conference at which they might be heard.

The petition was a modest document by the standards of Puritan ambition. It did not call for the abolition of episcopacy. It did not demand the institution of presbyterian polity. It asked for the removal of specific practices — the sign of the cross in baptism, the wedding ring, the kneeling at communion, the use of the surplice — that the faction considered residues of Catholicism, and for a number of reforms to the operation of the church courts and the quality of the parish ministry. The petitioners hoped to negotiate from a position that demonstrated their moderation. The Hampton Court Conference, which James agreed to convene, would assess what the new regime would be willing to concede.

The conference met across three days in January 1604 in the king's withdrawing chamber at Hampton Court Palace. The Puritan side was represented by four moderate ministers carefully chosen by the regime rather than by the petitioners themselves: John Rainolds, President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford; Laurence Chaderton, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge; Thomas Sparke, a Lincolnshire rector; and John Knewstubs, a Suffolk minister. The bishops' side was led by Archbishop Whitgift, who would die a month later, and by Richard Bancroft, Bishop of London, who would succeed him. Approximately a dozen senior clergy were in attendance. The king chaired the proceedings personally and conducted most of the questioning himself.

What the conference produced was the boundary the Stuart regime would maintain on Puritan accommodation. James was prepared to grant minor reforms: a new authorized translation of the Bible (the petitioners and the king both wished to be free of the Geneva Bible, whose marginal notes James regarded as politically subversive and whose readership among Puritans the king wished to reduce); minor revisions to the catechism; closer attention to the quality of the preaching ministry. He was not prepared to grant the structural reforms the petitioners had not asked for but that he believed the petitioners actually wanted. He had reigned for thirty-five years in Scotland under presbyterian pressure that had operated against royal authority in ways he had found insupportable, and he had developed an aphorism for the structural relationship between episcopal church government and royal sovereignty: *no bishop, no king*. The presbyterian order, as James understood

it from his Scottish experience, was an institutional form that produced clergy who claimed authority independent of the crown and who attempted to discipline kings as they disciplined their parishioners. The episcopal order was an institutional form whose bishops were appointed by the crown and through whom royal authority over religion operated. The king who lost the bishops would lose, in the same motion, the structural mechanism through which royal supremacy was exercised. James said so plainly. When Rainolds, in the second day's proceedings, used the word "presbytery" in describing some proposed reform, the king reportedly burst out in irritation that the petitioners were aiming at "a Scottish presbytery, which agreeth as well with a monarchy as God and the devil." He continued: "Then Jack and Tom and Will and Dick shall meet and at their pleasures censure me and my council." The threshold had been named. The Puritans would not cross it.

The conference closed with the Puritan delegation receiving few of the concessions they had hoped for. The bishops' party had carried the day. James appointed Bancroft to succeed Whitgift at Canterbury, signaling that the policy of enforced conformity would continue. Bancroft promulgated, with royal approval, a new book of canons in 1604 that tightened the requirements for ministerial subscription. Approximately ninety Puritan ministers were eventually deprived of their livings for refusal to subscribe. The Puritan faction registered the defeat. It had hoped for accommodation; it had received a more rigorous version of the Elizabethan settlement.

What the conference did produce, paradoxically, was an outcome the petitioners had asked for and that would prove operationally more consequential than the structural reforms they had been denied. James authorized the new translation of the Bible, eventually published in 1611 as the Authorized Version — the King James Bible. Forty-seven translators, working in six committees at Westminster, Cambridge, and Oxford, produced an English text drawing extensively on Tyndale's pioneering work of the 1520s and 1530s, on Coverdale's translation, on the Geneva Bible, and on the Bishops' Bible of 1568. The translators included both bishops' party men and Puritan-sympathetic figures; Laurence Chaderton served on one of the Cambridge committees. The text the translators produced would, across the subsequent centuries, become the most influential single book in the English-speaking world. It would supply the rhythms and vocabulary of English prose, the substantive content of English-language Protestant religious life, and the textual foundation of the Anglo-American religious imagination. The Puritan faction had failed to obtain the structural reformation it had sought. It had obtained, in compensation, the institutional instrument through which the next century's religious work would be conducted. The vernacular Bible was now in a definitive English form. What it would shortly produce, the architects of 1604 did not specifically anticipate.

The remainder of James's reign settled into a working accommodation between the regime and the Puritan faction. The king disliked the more extreme Puritans but valued the moderate ones for their loyalty to the Protestant cause against the Catholic threat. He preached personally against

Arminianism — the Continental theological movement that rejected Calvinist predestination — and his official position, established at the Synod of Dort in 1618 to which he sent English delegates, was firmly Calvinist. Puritan ministers continued to be deprived for nonconformity, but the deprivations were not pursued with the intensity that would later characterize the Caroline period. By 1625, when James died, the operational pattern of Elizabethan religious politics had been substantially preserved: the Puritan faction operating inside the Church of England as a tolerated faction, pressing for reform through the channels the regime would tolerate, holding gentry and parliamentary support sufficient to make outright suppression politically expensive, but unable to capture the institutional structure of the church.

Charles I succeeded his father in March 1625. The configuration was about to change.

IV. The Laudian Confrontation

Charles was twenty-four when he came to the throne. He had been raised in the household of his elder brother Henry, Prince of Wales, who had been the heir apparent until his death from typhoid in 1612, and whose more austere Protestant inclinations had shaped the household's religious culture. Charles's theological preferences had developed in a different direction. He had absorbed, through his court chaplains and through his own theological reading, an Arminian sensibility that emphasized sacramental grace, ceremonial decorum, the dignity of the visible church, and the doctrinal continuity between the English Church and the broader catholic tradition. He valued, in worship, what he and his contemporaries called "the beauty of holiness" — the elaborated ceremonial setting that placed liturgical action within an aesthetic and architectural framework expressive of divine majesty. His personal religious convictions were Protestant; his liturgical preferences were closer to what would later be called High Church. The combination would produce, when joined with the structural problems of his reign, the religious crisis that drove the Great Migration.

William Laud was the clerical figure through whom Charles's preferences became operational. Born in 1573 in Reading, the son of a clothier, educated at St. John's College Oxford, ordained priest in 1601, Laud had spent his early career as part of a small Oxford circle of anti-Calvinist theologians whose teacher Lancelot Andrewes had developed a distinctive English sacramental theology emphasizing continuity with the patristic and medieval inheritance. He had advanced slowly under Elizabeth and James. His patron George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham, secured him the bishopric of St. David's in 1621. Charles's accession accelerated his promotion: Bath and Wells in 1626, the Deanery of the Chapel Royal in the same year, London in 1628, the chancellorship of Oxford in 1630, and the archbishopric of Canterbury in 1633 on the death of George Abbot. The promotions were not the recognition of clerical seniority. They were the king's deliberate placement of his closest ecclesiastical adviser at the institutional levers through which religious policy was conducted.

What Charles and Laud attempted across the 1630s was the systematic reorientation of the English Church away from the Reformed consensus the Elizabethan settlement had loosely permitted and toward an Arminian and ceremonial vision the Puritan faction read as a movement back toward Rome. The reorientation operated at the level of clerical appointments — Laud filled vacant bishoprics and senior parish positions with clergy whose theological orientation matched his own — and at the level of liturgical practice. The wooden communion table, which under the Elizabethan rubric stood in the body of the church during services and was carried to whatever location the local custom dictated, was to be replaced with a stone altar, fixed at the east end of the chancel, railed off from the congregation, and approached by communicants kneeling at the rail. The arrangement registered visually as a return to medieval Catholic practice. To Laud and his party, it expressed the proper dignity of the eucharistic action; to the Puritan faction, it expressed the abandonment of Reformed eucharistic theology in favor of a real-presence sacramentalism the Reformation had been instituted to eliminate. The same dispute operated at every level of the policy: surplices made compulsory, where Elizabethan practice had been ambiguous; bowing at the name of Jesus enforced; the sign of the cross in baptism required; preaching reduced in priority relative to the prescribed liturgy; lectureships — endowed preaching positions outside the parish structure that had been one of the Puritan faction's principal institutional resources — systematically suppressed.

What gave the policy operational force was the apparatus through which it was enforced. Charles had dissolved Parliament in 1629 after a confrontation over forced loans, ship money, and the impeachment of his ministers, and had begun what became known as the Personal Rule — the eleven years from 1629 to 1640 during which he governed without summoning parliament and during which the prerogative courts became the primary instruments of central authority. The Court of Star Chamber, originally a privy council tribunal for offenses against public order, became under Laud's direction the mechanism through which religious dissent was prosecuted. The Court of High Commission, an ecclesiastical court with broad jurisdiction over matters of religious discipline, was the parallel instrument for clerical and lay nonconformity at the parish level. The two courts operated without the procedural protections that the common-law courts had developed — no juries, no fixed rules of evidence, no limits on the severity of punishments the courts could impose. Their proceedings were conducted in camera or in irregular hearings. Their punishments — fines, imprisonment, mutilation, branding, the pillory — were imposed by judicial discretion.

The case that registered most widely was the prosecution of William Prynne, John Bastwick, and Henry Burton in 1637. Prynne, a Puritan lawyer, had already been prosecuted in 1634 for his book *Histriomastix*, a thousand-page polemic against the theater that had been read by the Star Chamber as containing seditious aspersions on the queen. He had been fined £5,000, sentenced to life imprisonment, deprived of his Oxford degrees, expelled from Lincoln's Inn, and had his ears cropped on the pillory. The 1637 prosecution — for further publications attacking the Laudian episcopate — added new mutilations to the existing penalties. Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton each

had what remained of their ears cropped at the pillory; Prynne, who had been left with stumps from the 1634 mutilation, had the stumps removed, and the letters "SL" — for "Seditious Libeller" — branded on his cheeks. Prynne reportedly turned the branding back on the regime, declaring that "SL" stood for *Stigmata Laudis* — the marks of Laud. The three men were imprisoned in distant castles, their books burned, their property forfeited.

The mutilations did not produce the silencing that Laud expected. They produced popular fury that the prosecutions had not been designed to generate. Large crowds gathered for the pillory sentences and applauded the victims as martyrs. Pamphlet versions of the proceedings circulated through underground channels and made the prosecutions visible across the kingdom. The Puritan faction, which had previously contained its most extreme elements within the broader Reformed coalition, found that the mutilations had moved the broader coalition toward the position the extremes had occupied. A regime that branded the cheeks of Puritan lawyers had crossed a line the substrate understood, even where the substrate would have accepted the older patterns of suppression as ordinary religious discipline. By 1638, when Laud's attempt to impose a modified English Prayer Book on the Scottish Kirk produced the riot at St. Giles in Edinburgh, the riot's most famous moment registered: when the Dean of Edinburgh began to read the new liturgy, a woman in the congregation — traditionally identified as Jenny Geddes — threw her stool at his head, reportedly shouting "Daur ye say Mass in my lug?" The Scottish bishops' war that followed, the king's military defeat by the Covenanting armies in 1639 and 1640, the financial crisis that the wars produced and that forced Charles to summon Parliament in April 1640 for the first time in eleven years — these were the operational consequences of the Laudian policy at the level of regime survival.

The Long Parliament that assembled in November 1640 moved with deliberate speed to dismantle the apparatus of the Personal Rule. Star Chamber was abolished. The Court of High Commission was abolished. The Earl of Strafford, Laud's ally in the king's council, was attainted and beheaded in May 1641. Laud himself was impeached, imprisoned in the Tower in March 1641, tried by the House of Lords in 1644, and executed on Tower Hill in January 1645. The Civil War followed within a year of his imprisonment. The Long Parliament's Westminster Assembly produced, in the *Westminster Confession of Faith* of 1646, the most systematic statement of Reformed theology in English to that date; the brief experiment in presbyterian church government under the Long Parliament and the subsequent Independent settlement under the Commonwealth and Protectorate would, for the first time, give the Puritan factional substance institutional control of the English Church. The Restoration of 1660 would reverse the experiment and re-establish the Anglican settlement; the Act of Uniformity of 1662 would eject approximately two thousand Puritan ministers from their livings in what became known as the Great Ejection. The factional resolution at the English level would not, in the end, run in the Puritan direction.

What this Part is tracking, however, is not the English resolution. It is what happened to a particular slice of the Puritan substance that recognized, in the late 1620s and early 1630s, that the Laudian policy was unlikely to be reversed within their working lifetimes and that the institutional means for the further reformation they sought might not be available in England. That slice of the substance acquired a charter, organized a fleet, and migrated.

V. The Massachusetts Bay Company and the Cambridge Agreement

The Massachusetts Bay Company received its royal charter on March 4, 1629. The charter was, on its face, a commercial document: it granted to a group of investors the rights to a territory in New England, the powers to govern the territory through a governor, deputy governor, and elected assistants, and the corporate privileges that an English chartered company conventionally enjoyed. The territorial grant ran from three miles north of the Merrimack River to three miles south of the Charles, extending westward "from sea to sea" — a phrase the charter's drafters had not investigated geographically and that would prove, much later, to have been comprehensive in ways no one in 1629 had imagined. The investors included John Endecott, who had already led an advance party to Salem in 1628, and the broader circle of Puritan gentry and merchants who had been organizing the company across the preceding years.

The substantive purpose of the company was not strictly commercial. The investors expected, and the early company papers indicated, that the territory would be developed as a Puritan religious community whose institutional life would supply the further reformation the English settlement had not delivered. The Reformed clergy would be free to preach. The congregations would be free to organize on the New Testament pattern, without the ceremonial Laud was imposing. The parish life would be regulated by godly magistrates exercising the discipline the Elizabethan settlement had foreclosed. The territory would be, in Winthrop's later formulation, "a city upon a hill" — a model of Reformed Christian society visible to England and Europe, demonstrating what the further reformation could produce when conditions permitted its operation. The investors understood the project as religious, not commercial. The commercial structure of the charter was the legal vehicle through which the religious project would operate.

What the investors then accomplished, in the late summer of 1629, was the structural move that distinguished the Massachusetts Bay operation from prior English colonial ventures. The Cambridge Agreement, signed on August 26, 1629, by twelve principal investors meeting at Cambridge, committed them to emigrating personally to New England with their families *on condition that* the company's charter and its governing apparatus would be transferred from London to the colony. Conventional English colonial practice — and the Virginia Company's structure was the operative precedent — had located the charter and the governing board in London, with the colony itself operated as a subsidiary by an appointed governor and council. The colony was thereby continuously subject to oversight from the home country, and the home country's evolving

political and religious arrangements could be imposed on the colony as the political situation required. The Cambridge Agreement reversed the structure. The charter would move with the colonists; the governing apparatus would be in Massachusetts, not London; the colony's religious and political life would be conducted by its own resident officers, accountable to no English board.

The motion to transfer the charter was passed by the general court of the company on August 29, 1629. Investors unwilling to emigrate sold their shares to those who were. By the autumn the company had been substantially reorganized as an emigrating enterprise. John Winthrop, a Suffolk gentleman-lawyer who had previously held a minor office in the Court of Wards, was elected governor on October 20. The fleet was assembled across the winter and the early spring of 1630. Eleven ships, carrying approximately seven hundred passengers and the livestock and provisions for a settlement of substantial size, departed in successive sailings from Yarmouth and Southampton across March and April 1630. The flagship *Arbella*, with Winthrop aboard, sailed from Yarmouth on April 8 and arrived at Salem on June 12.

Aboard the *Arbella* — either composed during the voyage or delivered as a sermon to the assembled colonists at some point during the crossing or the early days at Salem; the exact circumstances remain disputed — Winthrop produced the document known as *A Modell of Christian Charity*. The document is one of the founding texts of the American religious imagination, and its central passage deserves to be quoted in its own register. After laying out the principles of mutual obligation that would govern the community's economic and social life, Winthrop arrived at his summative claim. The colonists, he said, had entered into a covenant with God, and the covenant's terms bound them to specific obligations the community would have to fulfill. If they fulfilled the obligations, "the Lord will be our God and delight to dwell among us, as His own people, and will command a blessing upon us in all our ways, so that we shall see much more of His wisdom, power, goodness and truth, than formerly we have been acquainted with." If they failed the obligations, "the Lord will surely break out in wrath against us, be revenged of such a perjured people, and make us know the price of the breach of such a covenant." And then the figure that would, three centuries and twenty-five presidential elections later, become one of the central images of American political rhetoric: "For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world."

The figure was scriptural — Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." Winthrop was deploying it to specify what the colonists were attempting and what failure would look like. The new settlement would be visible to England and to the broader Reformed Europe. The success of the further reformation it was attempting would be evidence that the reformation was possible; the failure would be evidence of the project's incoherence and would discredit, by retrospective association, the cause the colonists were attempting to serve. The

covenant the colonists had entered into bound them to make the project succeed. The success required substantive religious commitment, substantive institutional discipline, substantive willingness to subordinate private interest to the community's collective religious purpose. Winthrop was registering, at the founding moment, what the project's substantive content was and how the project would be evaluated. He was not the architect of a commercial venture pretending to be religious. He was the architect of a religious settlement whose institutional vehicle happened to be a commercial charter. The substantive religious commitment was the operation's organizing principle and would remain so for several generations after Winthrop's death.

VI. What the Settlement Established

The Massachusetts Bay Colony's first decade was the formative period during which the institutional structures the colony's subsequent life would operate through were established. The specific arrangements deserve attention because they will supply the conditions Part III of this case will examine.

The political structure followed from the charter as modified by the Cambridge Agreement. The general court — originally conceived as the assembly of the company's stockholders for the conduct of corporate business — became the colony's legislative body, with the freemen of the colony exercising the rights the charter had granted to the company's shareholders. The governor and the assistants, elected annually by the freemen, conducted the executive work. Across the early 1630s the structure was progressively democratized — within the limits the Puritan substantive commitments permitted. Freemanship was extended in 1631 to all adult male church members, which conferred political participation on a substantially larger population than the original shareholders had constituted; freemanship was not extended to the colony's adult males generally, because the substantive religious commitment that organized the project also organized its political franchise. To vote one had to be a church member in good standing. The political community and the religious community were, by design, coextensive.

The ecclesiastical structure took the form known subsequently as the New England Way. Each congregation was self-governing, choosing its own minister, conducting its own discipline, admitting its own members. There was no superior ecclesiastical authority — no bishop, no synod with binding power, no equivalent of the English Crown's supremacy over religious matters. The congregational order was substantively Reformed in its theology and operationally congregational in its polity. The arrangement was the structural reformation the English Puritan faction had not been able to obtain in England. It was now installed in Massachusetts as the institutional order of religious life, and the substrate that had migrated specifically to receive it accepted it as the substantive expression of the Reformation's proper conclusion.

The relationship between the political and ecclesiastical structures was carefully maintained. The colony was not a theocracy in the strict sense — the ministers did not hold political office. Cotton, Hooker, Shepard, and the major clerical figures of the founding generation conducted their work through their pulpits and their congregations, not through the general court. The political offices were held by laymen — Winthrop, Dudley, Bellingham, Endecott, the other magistrates. But the political community was the religious community. The political officers were elected by church members and were expected to govern in accordance with the religious commitments the church members held. The clergy advised the magistrates on questions of substantive religious policy; the magistrates legislated and enforced the policies that translated the religious commitments into operational practice. The Massachusetts Body of Liberties of 1641 — drafted principally by Nathaniel Ward, the minister of Ipswich — combined English common law with substantive Mosaic and Reformed provisions, producing a legal code whose religious foundations were explicit. Capital offenses included not only murder and treason but blasphemy, idolatry, and witchcraft. The structure registered, in legal form, what the colony was attempting to be.

The educational structure followed the substantive religious commitment with operational directness. The Puritan position that the Word required exposition meant that every congregation needed an educated minister capable of conducting the substantive theological work the pulpit required. The Reformed insistence on the priesthood of all believers — that every Christian had direct access to Scripture and was responsible for understanding what Scripture taught — meant that every Christian had to be capable of reading Scripture in the vernacular. Both commitments produced institutional consequences. The Massachusetts School Law of 1642 required every town to ensure that its children were taught to read; the Old Deluder Satan Act of 1647 went further, requiring every town of fifty households to maintain a schoolmaster, and every town of one hundred households to maintain a grammar school preparing students for university. The preamble of the 1647 act named the substantive religious rationale directly: "It being one chief project of that old deluder, Satan, to keep men from the knowledge of the Scriptures, as in former times by keeping them in an unknown tongue, so in these later times by persuading from the use of tongues..." Literacy was the institutional precondition for the Reformed religious life the colony was attempting to operate. The institutional commitment to literacy at the parish level — and the higher institutional commitment to a learned ministry at the university level — followed from the substantive religious commitment with mechanical regularity.

This is the structural feature Part III of the case will examine at length, and the conditions need to be named here so that the connection is operationally clear. The Massachusetts Bay Colony required ministers. The ministers had to be trained. The training could not be conducted at Cambridge or Oxford in England, both because the journey was prohibitive and because the English universities were under Laudian discipline that the colony had specifically migrated to escape. A new university would have to be established in Massachusetts, and the establishment would have to be substantively religious in its purpose. Harvard College was founded by an act of the general court

on October 28, 1636 — six years and four months after the *Arbella* had arrived at Salem. The act allocated £400 — half the colony's annual tax revenue — for the construction of "a schoole or colledge" at Newtowne, which would shortly be renamed Cambridge in honor of the English university where so many of the colony's clergy had been trained. John Harvard, a young Cambridge-educated minister who arrived in the colony in 1637 and died of consumption in September 1638, bequeathed his library of approximately four hundred books and half his estate of approximately £780 to the new institution. The general court named the college after him in March 1639. Within ten years Massachusetts had a college whose specific purpose was to train ministers for the colony's parishes, in a substantively Puritan curriculum, conducted by Puritan tutors, on land the Massachusetts Bay Company's charter had placed under the colony's own authority.

The factional substance the Massachusetts Bay founding had carried across the Atlantic was not unified. Roger Williams arrived in the colony in 1631 with substantively Reformed commitments that exceeded the magistrates' tolerance for theological elaboration. He challenged the colony's title to its lands on the grounds that the territory belonged properly to the Indians; he challenged the requirement that all colonists attend services at the parish church; he challenged the magistrates' authority to enforce the first table of the Decalogue — the commandments concerning religious duty — on the grounds that civil authority had no warrant to compel religious observance. The general court banished him in October 1635. He escaped to Narragansett Bay and founded what would become Providence Plantation, the seed of Rhode Island, on principles of religious liberty more thoroughgoing than anything Massachusetts could accept. Anne Hutchinson followed in 1636–1638, holding meetings in her Boston house at which she expounded her substantively Antinomian reading of Reformed theology and accused most of the colony's ministers of preaching a covenant of works rather than a covenant of grace. The general court, with John Winthrop in the chair, tried her in November 1637 and banished her in March 1638. She and her followers settled at Aquidneck Island, which became Portsmouth and Newport in what would eventually be Rhode Island. Thomas Hooker, the minister at Newtowne who had disagreed with Winthrop over the franchise's restriction to church members and over various procedural questions, led approximately a hundred of his congregants to the Connecticut Valley in 1636, founding Hartford and the seed of Connecticut Colony.

These factional movements were substantively Puritan; their disagreements with the Massachusetts magistrates were Reformed theological disputes about the proper interpretation and institutional implementation of Reformed commitments. None of them produced a non-Puritan settlement. What they produced was a New England distributed across multiple colonies — Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut, New Haven, Rhode Island, the New Hampshire and Maine settlements — each operating with its own variant of substantively Reformed Christianity, each requiring its own institutional infrastructure of churches and schools, and each contributing across subsequent decades to a regional religious culture whose density and substantive seriousness exceeded anything the mother country had produced. The Great Migration had brought, by 1640,

approximately twenty thousand Puritan emigrants to New England. The substrate of the new region was substantively committed to the Reformed configuration the emigrants had carried with them. The institutional structures the region required to maintain the configuration were being built across the same decade.

VII. What the Migration Carried Forward

The Civil War began in England in August 1642. The Long Parliament's Westminster Assembly began its work in July 1643. The Puritan substance that remained in England would, across the next two decades, conduct the experiment in further reformation that the Massachusetts migration had been instituted to conduct on the other side of the Atlantic. The English experiment would fail at the Restoration in 1660 and the Great Ejection of 1662 would close it definitively. The Massachusetts experiment would continue, modified across the subsequent generations but substantively continuous, into the eighteenth century and beyond.

What the migration had carried forward, from the institutional preconditions Part I named to the conditions Part III will examine, can be specified.

The first is the principle that a substantive religious configuration could organize a polity in territory specifically acquired for the purpose. England was a polity organized around an established religious settlement that contained variant theological positions within a single institutional structure. Massachusetts was a polity organized around a single theological position that constituted the polity's substantive identity. The substrate of Massachusetts was, by self-selection, substantively committed to the Reformed configuration the colony was operating. The political franchise was restricted to church members. The educational system was substantively religious. The legal code was substantively religious. The polity and the religion were, by design, coextensive. This was a configuration the Henrician operation had not produced and could not have produced; it required a substrate that had selected itself out of a more pluralist parent configuration and had moved to territory where the selection could be institutionalized as the polity's substantive content.

The second is the institutional commitment to literacy at the parish level and to learned ministry at the university level. The Massachusetts Bay Colony established, within twenty years of its founding, an educational system that placed every town under obligation to teach its children to read, and that placed larger towns under obligation to maintain grammar schools preparing students for college. The system was not designed to produce a literate population for civic or commercial purposes; it was designed to produce a literate population for religious purposes — to make the substantively Puritan religious life possible at the population scale. The unintended consequences across subsequent centuries — the development of a substantively literate New England population that would shortly conduct commercial, political, intellectual, and scientific work at levels the founders had not specifically envisioned — were the long downstream output of the institutional

commitment the religious project had required. Harvard, established in 1636 to train ministers for the colony's parishes, would shortly be supplying graduates to other professions as well — law, government, commerce — because the substantive education the institution provided was operational across multiple subsequent careers. The institutional structure the religious purpose had required would, across generations, develop secular uses the religious purpose had not anticipated.

The third is the principle of self-governing congregational autonomy as the operating ecclesiastical structure. The New England Way placed each congregation in operational charge of its own minister, its own discipline, and its own membership. The arrangement registered, at the level of religious organization, a structural principle whose consequences would be substantial across the subsequent centuries. A congregation that disagreed with its minister's theology could call a different minister. A group within a congregation that disagreed with the congregation's direction could form a new congregation. A new theological position that emerged within New England Puritanism could find institutional homes in congregations willing to call ministers who held the position. The structural absence of a superior ecclesiastical authority meant that factional differentiation within Reformed Christianity could proceed without the structural constraints the Elizabethan settlement had imposed. The differentiation would produce, across the subsequent two centuries, the bewildering proliferation of American Protestant denominations whose multiplication has no European parallel.

The fourth is the principle that political authority's relationship to religion was contestable in ways the English settlement had foreclosed. The Massachusetts magistrates conducted substantive religious policy in their colony, but they did so as a polity self-constituted around the substantive religious commitments of its substrate, not as an established church operating through state authority. Roger Williams's challenge — that civil authority had no warrant to compel religious observance — was banished from Massachusetts in 1635, but the challenge survived in Rhode Island as an alternative institutional principle whose subsequent influence on American constitutional development would be substantial. The full implications of the Williams position would not be drawn out for another century and a half. The position was already in the New England configuration by 1635, operating as an alternative to the Massachusetts settlement, available for subsequent development by figures who would draw on it for purposes neither Williams nor his Massachusetts opponents would have anticipated.

The fifth is the substantive religious commitment of the New England population itself. The Massachusetts substrate of 1640 was not the substrate of England in 1640. It had been self-selected by the migration; it had committed personally to a religious project at the cost of leaving its native country; it was intermarried within the substantive Puritan community across the subsequent decades; it raised its children within the substantively religious life the colony was operating. The next generation — the children born in Massachusetts in the 1640s and 1650s — would inherit, as the substantive condition of their religious life, what their parents had migrated to obtain. The

institutional structures the founding generation had built would supply those children with the educational and religious infrastructure required for the substantively religious life. By 1660 the substrate of New England was a substantively Reformed substrate, in a way the substrate of England had never quite been, and the configuration the founders had attempted to install was operating as the lived religious-political reality of approximately fifty thousand New Englanders.

This is the configuration Part III will examine in operation. The institutional structures the founders had established — the colonial governments, the congregational churches, the parish schools, the colleges — would conduct the substantive Puritan religious life across the seventeenth century, would generate the factional differentiations the structural openness of the New England Way permitted, would produce the institutional crises that successive generations would have to address with the resources the founders had bequeathed, and would shortly require the establishment of additional colleges as the original institution proved inadequate to the requirements that the differentiation was generating. The trajectory the Massachusetts founding had set in motion was already, by 1640, exceeding what the founders had specifically planned. Harvard had been established to train ministers for Massachusetts. By the eighteenth century there would be Yale, Princeton, Brown, Rutgers, Dartmouth — a network of colleges established by successive factional differentiations within the New England Reformed inheritance, each one founded to address a problem the previous generation's institutional arrangements had not anticipated, each one carrying forward a substantive religious project that would, across subsequent centuries, develop trajectories the founders had not intended.

The next part will examine how that institutional network was built.

Part III — The Colleges Multiply

I. The Problem Harvard Was Built to Solve

The general court of Massachusetts Bay assembled at Boston on October 28, 1636. The colony was six years old. Approximately twelve thousand colonists had arrived since the *Arbella* fleet in 1630. The institutional infrastructure required for ordinary life — towns, parish churches, courts, militia, the apparatus of trade with England and the Caribbean — was substantially in place. What was not yet in place was the institution required to produce the next generation of ministers. The colony's pulpits were occupied by men who had been educated at Cambridge or Oxford before the migration. Henry Dunster, who would shortly become the college's first president, had taken his Master's degree at Magdalene College, Cambridge, in 1634; Thomas Shepard, John Cotton, John Eliot, Richard Mather, and most of the colony's founding clergy had been formed at the English universities the migration had specifically left behind. The pulpits would, within a generation, require replacement. The replacements could not be obtained from England under the Laudian regime that had driven the migration. They would have to be produced in Massachusetts. That meant building a college.

The act of the general court allocated four hundred pounds — half the colony's tax revenue that year — toward the establishment of "a schoole or colledge" at Newtowne. The sum was substantial for a colony whose total annual expenditure remained modest. The colonists understood what they were buying. Two years later, in September 1638, John Harvard, a young Cambridge-educated minister who had arrived in the colony in 1637 and was now dying of consumption at Charlestown, bequeathed his library of approximately four hundred books and half his estate — somewhere between £779 and £1,700 in different accounts — to the new institution. The general court named the college after him in March 1639. By then Newtowne had been renamed Cambridge, after the English university where so many of the colony's clergy had taken their degrees. The institution opened under Dunster's presidency in 1640. The first class of nine students graduated in 1642.

The clearest statement of the founders' purpose appeared in *New England's First Fruits*, a promotional pamphlet printed in London in 1643 to defend the colony against criticisms that little evangelical work was being conducted there. The pamphlet's account of the college's founding has been quoted at the Johnston Gate entrance to Harvard Yard since the early twentieth century, and the original prose deserves to be heard in its own register. "After God had carried us safe to New England, and we had builded our houses, provided necessaries for our livelihood, reared convenient places for God's worship, and settled the civil government," the pamphlet recorded, "one of the next things we longed for and looked after was to advance learning and perpetuate it to posterity;

dreading to leave an illiterate ministry to the churches, when our present ministers shall lie in the dust." The fear named in the last clause is the operative point. The college was built because the colonists were afraid of what would happen when their ministers died. An untrained ministry would be unable to conduct the work the colony's religious life required. An untrained ministry would lose the doctrinal commitments the migration had been instituted to preserve. An untrained ministry would, within a generation or two, produce a New England that was no longer the New England the founders had migrated to build.

The 1642 College Laws give the curriculum's purpose with equal directness. "Let every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well the main end of his life and studies is to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life (John 17:3), and therefore to lay Christ in the bottom, as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning." The instruction continued: "And seeing the Lord only giveth wisdom, let everyone seriously set himself by prayer in secret to seek it of Him. Everyone shall so exercise himself in reading the Scriptures twice a day that he shall be ready to give such an account of his proficiency therein, both in theoretical observations of the language and the logic, and in practical and spiritual truths." Students rose at five for prayers and Scripture, attended lectures in Latin and Greek, conducted disputations in logic and rhetoric, and worked through the philosophical, mathematical, and natural-philosophical curriculum the seventeenth-century English universities had developed for the formation of clergy. The curriculum was substantial. Harvard graduates of the 1640s and 1650s were not less learned than their Oxford and Cambridge contemporaries; they were learned in a curriculum that had been deliberately reproduced from the English universities and that was operating in the New World with the religious purpose the migration had specified.

The institution did not, in its first decades, restrict its admissions to future ministers. Harvard educated, alongside the candidates for the pulpit, the sons of magistrates, merchants, and gentry who would shortly occupy the colony's offices of civil leadership. The same education served both purposes. A young man whose family intended him for the ministry took the same courses as a young man whose family intended him for a magistracy or a commercial career. The content of the education — the classical languages, the philosophical curriculum, the theological framework grounding the whole — was equally appropriate to both vocations because both vocations operated within the same religious-political community whose shared commitments the college was designed to perpetuate. Of the first century of Harvard graduates, approximately half entered the ministry. The other half entered the colony's civil offices, its commercial life, and the broader work of the New England settlement. The college was the institutional mechanism through which the colony's leadership — clerical and civil together — was being formed.

This is the institutional principle to register at the start. The Massachusetts founders did not build a college to produce a class of educated men whose subsequent careers would unfold in the wider economy. They built a college to produce ministers for the colony's pulpits, and the college

turned out to be useful for forming the colony's civil leadership as a secondary consequence. The secondary consequence was operationally valuable. The colony required magistrates as well as ministers, and the institution that produced one could economically produce the other. But the religious purpose was the founding purpose, and the broader formative work was understood as flowing from it. The institution had a specific job to do. The institution did the job. What the institution would do across the centuries that followed — what its graduates would become in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries — the founders had not specifically planned and could not have specifically planned. They had built the instrument they needed. The instrument acquired its own trajectory across the subsequent generations.

II. The Drift of the Founding College

The trajectory began to show within Harvard's first half-century. Henry Dunster, the first president, was removed from his office in 1654 for adopting Baptist views on infant baptism — he had concluded that the New Testament warrant for the practice was inadequate, and the Massachusetts magistrates considered his position incompatible with the colony's religious order. His successor Charles Chauncy, who served until 1672, restored Reformed orthodoxy at the institution. Increase Mather, Harvard graduate of 1656 and the most prominent Boston minister of the late seventeenth century, served as the college's sixth president from 1685 until 1701, attempting to maintain Calvinist rigor in an institution that his contemporaries had begun to suspect of doctrinal looseness.

The grounds for the suspicion were specific. Harvard had begun to admit students whose families could pay the fees but whose religious formation was less rigorous than the founding generation had assumed; the Boston merchant class, growing wealthy through transatlantic trade across the second half of the seventeenth century, was less uniformly Puritan than the colonists of the 1630s had been; the broader religious culture of New England was, by the 1680s and 1690s, no longer the tight Reformed community the migration had produced. The Half-Way Covenant of 1662 — an arrangement by which the children of baptized but unconverted parents could themselves be baptized, on the grounds that the alternative was the demographic shrinkage of the church into a small and self-selected remnant — had been a compromise the founding theology had not anticipated and that the more rigorous Calvinists considered an unacceptable softening of the order. Harvard, as the central institution shaping the next generation of clergy, was a focal point for the broader anxiety. The Mathers — Increase and his son Cotton, who took his Harvard A.B. in 1678 — read the institution's drift as a sign that the New England project was losing the religious commitments the founding generation had carried across the Atlantic.

What the Mathers eventually concluded was that Harvard was beyond saving. Increase Mather was forced out of the presidency in 1701 by a faction within the corporation that wanted the college's affairs conducted in a more accommodating spirit; the successor presidents, John Leverett

(1708–1724) and Benjamin Wadsworth (1725–1737), moved the institution in a direction the Mathers regarded as theologically lax. Harvard was, by the early eighteenth century, ceasing to be a reliable instrument for the production of the Calvinist clergy the older New England culture required. What the Mathers and their allies began to consider was the construction of a new institution that would do what Harvard was no longer doing — that would, in its turn, produce the clergy the older theological commitments demanded.

The factional logic deserves to be named carefully because it will repeat across the next century with mechanical regularity. The founders of Harvard had built an institution to solve a religious problem. The institution had solved the problem across its first decades. The institution had then drifted away from the religious commitments that had organized its founding, in part because the wider colonial society was drifting in the same direction, in part because the institution's own internal dynamics — corporate politics, faculty appointments, the social composition of the student body, the inevitable tendency of an established institution to develop interests of its own that do not perfectly track the interests of its founding constituency — had carried it further than the founders had intended. The faction that wished to maintain the older commitments could not capture the institution. It could, however, build a new institution. The new institution would solve the same problem the original institution had been built to solve, and the old institution would be left to its own further drift.

III. The Connecticut Response

The new institution was the Collegiate School, chartered by the General Court of Connecticut on October 9, 1701. The act's language registered the founders' purpose directly: the school was to be established for "the education of youth in the arts and sciences," and its graduates were to be "fitted for public employment both in church and civil state." The founders' theological position was Reformed Congregationalism in its more conservative inflection, and the institution was understood as Connecticut's equivalent of what Harvard had been before its drift had carried it elsewhere. The ten founding ministers — Samuel Andrew, Thomas Buckingham, Israel Chauncy, Samuel Mather, James Noyes, James Pierpont, Abraham Pierson, Noadiah Russell, Joseph Webb, and Timothy Woodbridge — were all Harvard graduates. They were attempting to reproduce, in Connecticut, the institutional formation they had themselves received at the founding institution before the founding institution had ceased to be what they considered it ought to be. The act of founding was an act of factional differentiation within the New England Reformed community, conducted through the establishment of a parallel institution.

The Collegiate School opened in 1702 in the home of Abraham Pierson at Killingworth. It moved to Saybrook in 1707, then to New Haven in 1716 after extended dispute among the trustees about the proper location. The Saybrook Platform of 1708 — drafted by a Connecticut synod whose convening had been authorized by the colony's General Assembly — established the institutional

discipline under which Connecticut's Congregational churches would operate, providing for ministerial associations and consociations whose role was to maintain doctrinal coherence across the colony's parishes. The Platform was more Presbyterian in its structure than the strictly Congregational pattern Massachusetts had inherited from the founding decades; the Connecticut founders considered the additional ecclesiastical structure necessary to prevent the kind of doctrinal drift they considered Harvard had exhibited. The College and the Platform were institutional companions. Both were designed to maintain in Connecticut what had been lost in Massachusetts.

The renaming of the institution in 1718 supplies an additional detail worth noting. Cotton Mather, in his Boston pulpit and in his extensive correspondence, had been a vigorous supporter of the Connecticut college from its founding — partly out of his alienation from the Harvard he had once expected to lead, partly out of his conviction that Connecticut's institution was operating with the doctrinal seriousness the broader New England project required. When the trustees sought funding for the construction of a new building at New Haven, Mather wrote to Elihu Yale, a Boston-born merchant whose father had been an original settler of New Haven and who had subsequently made a fortune as governor of Madras for the East India Company, asking for support. Yale sent goods that sold for £562, plus four hundred and seventeen books and a portrait of King George I. The trustees, at Mather's suggestion, renamed the college Yale in his honor. The renaming was a piece of institutional fundraising — Mather was hoping for additional and larger donations that did not in the event materialize before Yale's death in 1721 — but it captured something accurate about the institution's formative period. The college was being built through the donations of New England Reformed networks operating across the Atlantic, drawing on commercial wealth that was itself the product of the broader Protestant settlement the founders' parents had migrated to build, and the wealth was being deployed to maintain the religious commitments the founders considered the migration to have specified.

By the second decade of the eighteenth century, then, New England had two institutions producing Reformed clergy. Harvard, in Massachusetts, operating with the more accommodating theological orientation that had developed across its first century. Yale, in Connecticut, operating with the more rigorous Calvinist commitment its founders had specifically built it to maintain. The two institutions were not separated by major theological distance — both were producing graduates within the broad Reformed Congregational consensus of New England, both were teaching substantially the same classical and philosophical curriculum, both were within the same trans-Atlantic network of Reformed institutional life. What separated them was the inflection of their religious purpose and the rigor of their doctrinal commitments. Connecticut's institution would shortly be tested by an event neither of New England's colleges had been built to anticipate. Massachusetts's would be tested in the same event. Both would respond to the test in ways that produced consequences neither set of founders had specifically planned.

IV. The Revival

George Whitefield arrived at Newport, Rhode Island, on September 14, 1740, after a sea passage from Charleston. He was twenty-five years old. He had been ordained in the Church of England in 1736, had begun his preaching career in Bristol and London, had crossed the Atlantic for the first time in 1738 to serve briefly as parish priest at Savannah and to found the Bethesda Orphanage, and had returned to England the following year. The 1740 visit was his second to the American colonies, and he came with a reputation that had been building across the Anglo-American Protestant world for two years. The reputation rested on a particular kind of preaching. Whitefield preached out of doors, frequently to crowds of several thousand and on occasion to crowds of ten thousand or more, in the open air on town greens and in fields where no church could contain his audience. He preached extemporaneously, without manuscript, on the central themes of evangelical conversion: the natural sinfulness of the human heart, the necessity of personal new birth through the work of the Holy Spirit, the inadequacy of mere outward religious observance, the urgent and immediate availability of saving grace through faith in Christ. He had a powerful voice that carried across open ground, a striking physical presence despite an obvious squint, and a delivery that contemporaries on both sides of the Atlantic considered the most affecting they had ever heard.

His New England tour across the autumn of 1740 demonstrated what the new evangelical preaching could accomplish at scale. He preached at Newport on September 14 and 15, then moved north to Boston, where he was hosted by the leading clergy of the city — Benjamin Colman, Joshua Gee, Thomas Foxcroft, Joseph Sewall — and preached to crowds estimated at five and six thousand on the Boston Common. He preached at Harvard on September 24, addressing the students and tutors of the institution where his theological views would shortly become controversial. He moved on to Salem, Ipswich, Newbury, and the towns of eastern Massachusetts. On October 17 he was at Northampton in the Connecticut Valley, where the parish minister Jonathan Edwards had been conducting a series of more local revivals across the preceding decade and had written *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God* in 1737 describing what had happened in his town in 1734 and 1735. Whitefield preached at Edwards's church on October 17 and 18. Edwards wept through the sermons. From Northampton, Whitefield moved south through Connecticut — Middletown, New Haven, Stratford — and on to New York and the southern colonies.

The diary of Nathan Cole, a Connecticut farmer at Kensington, captures what the revival looked like at the level of the substrate it was reaching. Cole records that on the morning of October 23, 1740, he was at work in his field when a messenger rode by shouting that Whitefield was to preach at Middletown at ten o'clock. Cole immediately dropped his tools, ran to the house to fetch his wife, saddled his horse, and rode the twelve miles to Middletown. The roads were thick with people moving in the same direction — "thousands of footmen, horsemen, and people in carriages, who came from all parts." When they arrived at Middletown, the meadow was filled with three or four

thousand people. Whitefield mounted a temporary platform. Cole wrote that "my hearing him preach gave me a heart wound." He returned home and entered a period of personal religious crisis whose resolution, by his own account, transformed the substance of his life.

What Whitefield was producing across his New England tour was the surface manifestation of a movement that had been gathering at parish-level depth for half a decade. Edwards's Northampton revival of 1734–1735 had been an early local instance of the same dynamic. Theodore Frelinghuysen, the Dutch Reformed minister at Raritan in New Jersey, had been conducting revivals through his Hudson Valley parishes since the early 1720s. The Tennent family — William Tennent the elder and his sons Gilbert, John, William Jr., and Charles — had been operating the Log College at Neshaminy in Pennsylvania since 1727, producing Presbyterian ministers committed to evangelical preaching and pressing for revival across the middle colonies. Gilbert Tennent's sermon *The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry*, delivered at Nottingham, Pennsylvania, in March 1740 and printed in Philadelphia the same year, supplied the movement's most aggressive single document: it argued that ministers who had not themselves experienced evangelical conversion were unfit to preach the gospel, that parishioners whose ministers fell into this category were obligated to seek out preaching elsewhere, and that the institutional structures of the established churches were complicit in the spiritual death of their congregations. The argument cut across the conventional understanding of ministerial authority. A minister was no longer to be obeyed simply because he had been ordained and installed in his parish; the minister's authority depended on his own spiritual state, which was knowable through the marks of conversion the evangelical preaching had specified. The implications for ecclesiastical order were substantial.

Jonathan Edwards's *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, preached at Enfield, Connecticut, on July 8, 1741, gave the revival its single most quoted document. Edwards was thirty-seven years old, the grandson of Solomon Stoddard of Northampton and the inheritor of his grandfather's pulpit, a graduate of Yale (A.B. 1720, M.A. 1722) and the foremost theological mind of the colonial period. The Enfield sermon was not the most original of his works — his sustained theological treatises, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (1746) and *The Freedom of the Will* (1754) and *Original Sin* (1758), would establish his standing as the most rigorous philosophical theologian the colonies had produced. But the Enfield sermon was the document the revival's enemies and partisans alike would quote across the next century, and its central image of the sinner suspended over hell as a spider over a flame captured the movement's theological content with extreme economy. "The God that holds you over the pit of hell," Edwards preached, "much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you and is dreadfully provoked: his wrath towards you burns like fire... you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes, than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours." The sermon's evidentiary effects were striking at the local level. The Enfield congregation, by contemporary accounts, was reduced to weeping and groans audible across the meetinghouse. Eleazar Wheelock, who had pressed Edwards to preach in the first place when the originally scheduled preacher had fallen ill, recorded that the sermon's effects continued for hours

and that many in the congregation rose from the service in such distress that they could not be calmed for days.

The revival's effects on the institutional life of New England Protestantism were operationally consequential. The doctrines the revivalists preached — the necessity of conversion, the inadequacy of mere outward observance, the immediate availability of saving grace through evangelical preaching — produced, in the parish-level life of the towns the revivalists reached, a transformation of religious experience that the older institutional forms could not contain. Parishioners who had received the evangelical preaching now experienced their old ministers, if those ministers had not themselves been converted in the new pattern, as inadequate to their religious needs. Congregations split. Members who had been satisfied with the older ministry left their parish churches to attend the preaching of New Light ministers in neighboring parishes or in newly gathered congregations. The institutional structure of the New England churches — with parish membership tied to geographical residence and with parish boundaries defining religious affiliation — began to come apart under the pressure of religious experience that no longer accepted the parish as its operational boundary.

By 1742 the New England clergy had divided into two recognizable parties. The New Lights, who accepted the revival as the work of the Holy Spirit and who supported the evangelical preaching of Whitefield, Edwards, and Tennent, became the dominant party in the towns where the revival had taken strongest hold. The Old Lights, led by Charles Chauncy of the First Church in Boston and supported by most of the senior clergy of the older Massachusetts establishment, opposed the revival as a movement of religious enthusiasm whose excesses — the weeping, the bodily manifestations, the unauthorized lay preaching, the public criticism of unconverted ministers — were producing disorder in the churches and would shortly produce disorder in the broader civil community. Chauncy's *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England* (1743) supplied the Old Light position with its most developed statement. The revival, in Chauncy's reading, was not the work of the Spirit but a movement of religious passion that confused emotional intensity with spiritual substance, that promoted unfit men to positions of religious leadership, and that threatened the institutional order of the churches the New England founders had built.

The divisions ran across the existing institutional structures. They ran across the Presbyterian denomination, which split in 1741 into Old Side and New Side synods that would not reunite until 1758. They ran across the Congregational establishment of New England, which did not formally split but whose internal factionalism produced operational fractures in dozens of parishes and the formal separation of dissenting congregations in many of them. They ran across the colleges. Yale, under the rectorship of Thomas Clap, attempted to suppress New Light agitation among its students; David Brainerd, the Yale undergraduate who would later become the missionary to the Delawares and whose journal Edwards would edit and publish after his death, was expelled from Yale in 1742 for having privately criticized a tutor as having "no more grace than this chair." The expulsion registered the Clap administration's commitment to Old Light institutional order. The expulsion also

produced, by the dynamics the revival had set in motion, fresh institutional consequences neither the administration nor the expelled student could have foreseen.

V. New Light Institutions

The institutional consequence of the revival's fracturing of the New England Reformed coalition was a wave of new college foundations across the middle decades of the eighteenth century. Each foundation was the institutional response to a specific factional position the existing colleges did not accommodate. Each was conducted by men who had themselves been formed at one of the existing institutions and who had concluded, by 1740s logic, that the institution that had formed them was no longer producing the kind of minister their factional position required.

The College of New Jersey was chartered on October 22, 1746, by Governor John Hamilton of New Jersey, who issued the charter under the colony's seal a few days before his death; the charter was reissued in stronger form on September 14, 1748, by Governor Jonathan Belcher. The founders were New Side Presbyterians — Jonathan Dickinson, Aaron Burr Sr., Ebenezer Pemberton, John Pierson — evangelical Calvinists associated with the Tennent circle and the broader New Light movement, and who had concluded that the existing colleges would not produce ministers for the New Side party. Yale was unavailable: Clap's Old Light administration had made the Connecticut institution inhospitable to New Side candidates. Harvard had drifted too far from the doctrinal commitments the New Side considered necessary. The Log College at Neshaminy had been the New Side's principal training institution since the 1720s, but William Tennent the elder was aging and the institution lacked a charter that would permit it to grant degrees. The Presbyterian split of 1741, in which the New Side synods had been excluded from the Old Side body, had institutionalized the factional division at the denominational level. The College of New Jersey was the New Side's response — a chartered institution whose graduates would supply the New Side ministry with the formation the existing institutions would not provide.

The new college opened in May 1747 in the parsonage of Jonathan Dickinson at Elizabethtown. Dickinson died five months later. Aaron Burr Sr., minister at Newark, became the second president and moved the college to Newark in November 1747. The first class of six graduated in November 1748. Burr died in 1757; Jonathan Edwards, who had been called from his missionary work at Stockbridge to succeed him, served as the third president for five weeks before dying of a smallpox inoculation in March 1758. The college's first decade was operationally turbulent. By 1756 it had moved to Princeton and was housed in the new Nassau Hall, then the largest academic building in the British colonies. The fifth president, Samuel Davies, served two years before his death in 1761; the sixth, Samuel Finley, served five years before his death in 1766. The college's mortality rate among its presidents was high enough that the trustees began to look across the Atlantic for a candidate whose health and stamina might supply the institution with the stability it had not yet achieved.

The candidate they found was John Witherspoon, who arrived at Princeton in August 1768 to assume the presidency. Witherspoon was forty-five years old. He was an evangelical Scottish Presbyterian minister, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh, the author of widely circulated theological polemics against the moderate party in the Church of Scotland, and a recognized figure in the Reformed transatlantic network. His arrival changed the institution's character. He brought with him the Scottish Enlightenment's curriculum in moral philosophy, drawing on Francis Hutcheson and Thomas Reid's common-sense realism; he reorganized the college's instruction in rhetoric, history, and natural philosophy; he expanded the library substantially with Scottish books brought from Edinburgh and Glasgow; he established Princeton as the principal training institution for Presbyterian ministers in the colonies, and shortly thereafter, as the political question of the colonies' relationship to Britain became the dominant question of the period, as a training institution for the rising generation of political leaders.

What Witherspoon's curriculum did was combine Reformed theology with Scottish Enlightenment moral philosophy in a configuration that produced graduates intellectually equipped for both clerical and civil leadership in the new colonial society. The combination mattered. Reformed theology supplied the doctrinal framework — the convictions about human sinfulness, the necessity of restraints on human power, the proper relationship between civil authority and religious authority, the natural-law tradition through which moral and political questions had been addressed in the Reformed tradition since Calvin. Scottish Enlightenment moral philosophy supplied the analytic vocabulary — the common-sense realism through which Reid had defended the reliability of ordinary human knowledge against Humean skepticism, the moral-sense theory through which Hutcheson had grounded ethics in human nature rather than in revelation alone, the political economy through which Adam Smith and the broader Scottish school had analyzed the dynamics of commercial society. The combination was not unique to Princeton — it was the broader configuration of late-eighteenth-century Reformed intellectual life across the Atlantic world — but Princeton under Witherspoon was the institution that delivered it most completely to the rising generation of colonial leadership.

James Madison entered the College of New Jersey in the summer of 1769, twelve months after Witherspoon's arrival. Madison was eighteen. He had been prepared for college by Donald Robertson, a Scottish-trained tutor who had taught a number of prominent Southern families, and by the Reverend Thomas Martin, a 1762 Princeton graduate who had served as the Madison family's parish minister. Madison had been intended originally for the College of William and Mary, the standard institution for young Virginians of his class. The Williamsburg climate was thought unhealthy; Princeton, on more elevated ground in central New Jersey, was the alternative. Madison entered as a sophomore, completing the three-year course of study in two years and graduating in 1771. He remained at Princeton for an additional year studying Hebrew, political philosophy, and law under Witherspoon's direct supervision. The contact with Witherspoon shaped Madison's intellectual formation in ways that would be visible across his subsequent career. The Federalist

Papers' arguments about the dynamics of faction, the necessity of separated powers, the proper relationship between religious authority and civil authority — all of these have their roots in the formation Madison received at Princeton, in the Reformed-Enlightenment synthesis Witherspoon was teaching. The specific argument of *Federalist 10* — that an extended republic could control the dangers of faction better than a small one — has been read by historians as a direct application of Witherspoon's teaching on the political consequences of human nature.

Madison was not alone. Witherspoon's Princeton, across the period from 1768 to his death in 1794, produced an extraordinary concentration of leadership for the new American Republic. The institution's graduates included Aaron Burr Jr., Vice President of the United States and the man who killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel. They included William Bradford, Attorney General. They included Hugh Henry Brackenridge, novelist and jurist. They included Philip Freneau, the "Poet of the Revolution." Across the course of Witherspoon's presidency Princeton produced ten cabinet officers, six members of the Continental Congress, thirty-nine Congressmen, twenty-one U.S. Senators, twelve state governors, three justices of the U.S. Supreme Court, and thirty-seven other judges. When the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America met in 1789 to organize the denominational structure of American Presbyterianism, fifty-two of the one hundred eighty-eight delegates had studied under Witherspoon. The institution that had been founded to produce New Side Presbyterian ministers had, within a generation of its founding, become the principal training institution for the founding generation of the American Republic. The two purposes were not in tension. They were the same purpose operating across different fields of action. The Reformed-Enlightenment configuration Witherspoon was teaching produced both ministers and statesmen, because in the colonial society of the 1770s and 1780s ministers and statesmen were operating in the same world, on the same intellectual foundations, with the same understanding of human nature and the same convictions about how human societies ought to be organized.

VI. The Network Multiplies

Princeton was the first of the New Light foundations. It was not the only one. The pattern Princeton had established — a factional position within the broader Reformed coalition acquiring a chartered college of its own — would be repeated across the next two decades by other factional positions whose institutional requirements the existing network did not meet.

The College of Rhode Island was chartered in February 1764 by the General Assembly of the colony, with the operational purpose of producing Baptist ministers and providing higher education to a religious community the existing colleges had not historically served. Rhode Island had been founded by Roger Williams in 1636 on principles of religious liberty that distinguished it from the Massachusetts and Connecticut establishments; the colony had been the home of Baptist congregations from its founding period; the Baptist denomination had grown across the eighteenth

century, particularly in the southern New England and the middle colonies, and had begun to require its own institutional infrastructure for clerical training. The college's first president was James Manning, a graduate of the College of New Jersey (Princeton) class of 1762, ordained Baptist minister, who organized the institution at Warren, Rhode Island, in 1765 and moved it to Providence in 1770. The charter specified that the college was open to "youth of all religious denominations," that no religious test would be required for admission, and that no member of any denomination would be excluded from the faculty or trustees. The provisions registered Rhode Island's distinctive religious culture. The college was renamed Brown University in 1804 after a major donation from Nicholas Brown Jr., a member of the prominent Providence merchant family whose wealth had been derived in significant part from the transatlantic slave trade.

Queen's College was chartered in November 1766 by Governor William Franklin of New Jersey. Its founders were Dutch Reformed ministers and laymen of the middle colonies — Theodorus Frelinghuysen Jr., John Henry Goetschius, John Leydt — who had concluded that the New Jersey colony's substantial Dutch Reformed population required its own institutional infrastructure for clerical training. The Coetus faction within American Dutch Reformed Christianity, which had been pressing for the development of an indigenous American institutional life independent of ecclesiastical oversight from the Classis of Amsterdam, was the founding constituency for the new college. The institution opened at New Brunswick in 1771 with a small faculty and student body, struggled financially through its first half-century, and was renamed Rutgers in 1825 after a donation from Henry Rutgers, a Revolutionary War veteran and New York philanthropist. The Dutch Reformed denominational base meant that the institution operated for most of its early history with a clerical clientele drawn from a relatively narrow religious community; the institution would later broaden, but its founding logic was the same as Princeton's — a factional position within the broader Reformed coalition acquiring its own chartered college because the existing network did not accommodate its specific needs.

Dartmouth College was chartered in December 1769 by Governor John Wentworth of New Hampshire. Its founder was Eleazar Wheelock, who had been the minister at Lebanon, Connecticut, since 1735, who had been Edwards's friend and ally throughout the Great Awakening, and who had been operating Moor's Indian Charity School at Lebanon since 1755 with the purpose of training Native American boys for missionary work among their own communities. Wheelock had raised substantial funds for the school across the 1760s through a transatlantic fundraising tour conducted on his behalf by Samson Occom, a Mohegan minister who had been educated at the school and who became, in his appearance in Britain in 1766–1768, one of the first Native American figures to address British audiences directly on the subject of American Indian education. The funds raised — approximately £12,000 sterling — were administered by a board of trustees in London. Wheelock used the funds to relocate the school to Hanover, New Hampshire, in 1770, where it became Dartmouth College. The institution's mission shifted across its first decade from primarily Indian education to primarily white colonial education, a shift that the trustees in London criticized but

could not prevent. Wheelock's son John, who succeeded him as president in 1779, operated the institution as a New Light Congregational college whose religious character matched the broader pattern of New Light institutional life across the region.

By 1769, then, the network of colonial colleges had expanded from the two New England institutions of 1701 — Harvard and Yale — to a network of nine: Harvard (1636), the College of William and Mary (1693, Anglican, chartered to provide Anglican clergy for the Virginia establishment), Yale (1701), the College of New Jersey/Princeton (1746), King's College/Columbia (1754, Anglican, chartered in New York), the College of Philadelphia/Pennsylvania (1755, the only non-denominational founding among the colonial colleges, established under Benjamin Franklin's influence), the College of Rhode Island/Brown (1764), Queen's College/Rutgers (1766), and Dartmouth (1769). Each had been founded by a specific religious community to address that community's institutional requirements. Each was operating, by the late 1760s and early 1770s, as a working institution producing clergy and educated laymen for the community that had founded it. None of them had been founded with the purpose of producing political leadership for an independent American Republic. None of them could have been founded with that purpose, because the Republic did not yet exist and would not exist until 1776 at the earliest. What they had been founded to do was solve the specific religious problem each founding community had faced. What they would shortly do — across the decade between the Stamp Act crisis of 1765 and the Declaration of Independence in 1776, and then across the decade between the Declaration and the Constitution of 1787 — was supply the institutional formation for the leadership generation that would conduct the political work neither the founders nor anyone in the 1750s and 1760s had specifically anticipated.

VII. The Founders Were Formed Inside the Network

The leadership generation that assembled at Philadelphia in 1776 and at Independence Hall in 1787 had been formed, with considerable institutional density, inside the colonial college network. The numbers register the pattern. Of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence, twenty-six had received college educations; of these, nine were Harvard graduates, four were Yale graduates, four were Princeton graduates (including Witherspoon himself, signing as a delegate from New Jersey), three were graduates of William and Mary, two of Pennsylvania, and the remainder distributed across other institutions including some in Britain. Of the fifty-five delegates to the Philadelphia Convention of 1787, twenty-nine were college graduates; nine of these were Princeton graduates, three from Yale, three from Harvard, four from Pennsylvania, two from William and Mary, and the remainder from other institutions. The Princeton concentration is operationally significant. By the late 1780s the institution that had been founded forty years earlier to produce New Side Presbyterian ministers had become the single most heavily represented college in the founding generation's political work.

The Princeton effect was not a coincidence and was not, in its specifics, a product of the institution's Presbyterian denominational character. It was a product of Witherspoon's curriculum. The combination of Reformed theology with Scottish Enlightenment moral philosophy that Witherspoon had imported from Edinburgh and Glasgow supplied an analytical framework for political and constitutional questions that the older curricular configurations did not provide. Harvard, across the same period, was operating with a curriculum that had become less rigorously Reformed than its founding curriculum and that had not yet absorbed the Scottish Enlightenment to the degree Princeton had; the institution produced excellent classical scholars and competent New England clergy, but it had not, in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, been doing the work Witherspoon was doing on the philosophical foundations of civil society. Yale, under Thomas Clap's successor presidents Naphtali Daggett (1766–1777) and Ezra Stiles (1778–1795), was moving in the same direction as Princeton — Stiles in particular was an intellectually serious president whose interests ran across the philosophical and political disciplines the period required — but Stiles only took office two years after the Declaration, and the institution's formative work on the founding generation was largely complete by then. Princeton had been first to the configuration and Princeton had supplied the largest concentration of graduates to the founding generation's political work.

What this configuration meant, in operational terms, was that the men who designed the institutional architecture of the American Republic had been formed in a Reformed-Enlightenment intellectual framework whose specific contents shaped the political work they conducted. James Madison's *Federalist 10*, with its argument that the multiplication of factions in an extended republic would prevent any single faction from dominating the whole, drew directly on Witherspoon's teaching about the political dynamics of human nature and the practical mechanisms through which the consequences of human sinfulness could be channeled into productive rather than destructive political outcomes. Madison's broader work on the separation of powers — visible in his Virginia Plan of 1787, his contributions to the Constitutional Convention's debates, his work on the Bill of Rights of 1789 — drew on the same configuration. The Reformed insistence on the depravity of human nature, when combined with the Enlightenment confidence in the design of political institutions, produced the constitutional architecture the founders built. The premise was Reformed: human beings, left to themselves, would seek their own advantage at the expense of their neighbors, and any concentration of political power would shortly be abused by those who held it. The institutional response was Enlightenment: the architecture of government could be designed to check the abuses through the structural arrangement of competing centers of power, none of which would be able to act without the cooperation of the others, and through which the human tendency to abuse power would be turned against itself rather than against the public. The combination was the founding generation's signature political achievement, and it had its institutional roots in the colonial college network and most directly in Witherspoon's Princeton.

What the founders did not do — what the founders could not have done, given the specific religious commitments their formation had produced — was design a Republic whose political architecture would be directly continuous with the Reformed religious establishments their colleges had been founded to maintain. The First Amendment's establishment clause, drafted by Madison and ratified by the states in 1791, prohibited Congress from establishing a national religion. The disestablishment clauses that paralleled it in the various state constitutions, adopted across the period from 1776 (Virginia, New Jersey) through the early decades of the nineteenth century (Connecticut in 1818, Massachusetts in 1833), progressively eliminated the formal connections between religious institutions and political authority that had characterized the colonial period. The founding generation was Reformed in its religious formation and Enlightenment in its constitutional principles, and the constitutional principles required the disestablishment of the religious institutions whose formative work had produced the founders themselves. The result was a Republic whose political institutions were formally separated from the religious institutions whose graduates had designed them.

The structural consequence of this arrangement was that the colleges, having served as the formative institutions for the founding generation, would shortly require institutional reorientation to continue functioning in the new constitutional environment. Religious colleges in a polity that had formally disestablished religion had to find new sources of operational legitimacy and new constituencies for their continuing work. Some would maintain their religious character as private institutions serving the religious communities that had founded them; some would broaden their constituencies and become regional educational centers whose religious character would gradually attenuate; some would, across the next century, transform into elite training institutions for the professional and managerial classes of the broader Republic. The transformation was not yet underway in 1787. It would begin, gradually, across the early nineteenth century, accelerate across the middle decades of the century, and by the period after the Civil War would have substantially changed what the institutions had been founded to be. The colleges, having been built by the religious project, would shortly outlast the religious project that built them, and the institutional logic they had developed across their first century and a half would carry them forward into a constitutional and economic environment whose specific shape no one in the 1740s or 1760s had been able to predict.

The next part of this case will examine that transformation. The colleges' founding generation had produced the institutional infrastructure required by a specific religious project. The infrastructure had then produced, through the dynamics that had carried Witherspoon's Princeton into its operational position at the center of the founding generation's formation, an outcome the founders had not specifically planned: the institutional formation of the political leadership of the new Republic. The Republic, once founded, had specific institutional needs of its own. The colleges, having served the religious project that founded them and the political founding the religious project had unexpectedly enabled, would shortly be reoriented again to serve the needs of

the Republic across its first century. The pattern repeats: the institutional vehicle continues to operate after the founding purpose that built it has been substantially completed, and across the subsequent generations the vehicle acquires uses its founders could not have anticipated.

VIII. What the Colonial Network Had Established

Three features of the colonial college network deserve specific attention at the close of Part III because the rest of the case depends on them.

The first is the institutional logic by which factional differentiation within the Reformed coalition had produced a multiplication of colleges across the colonies. The pattern is operationally consistent across the founding period. A specific religious community identifies a problem the existing institutional network does not solve. The community charters a new institution to solve the problem. The new institution operates for a generation or two as the dedicated infrastructure of the founding community. The new institution then develops, across the subsequent generations, trajectories that exceed the founding purpose — admitting students from broader constituencies, developing curricula that respond to changing intellectual conditions, supplying graduates to professions and occupations the founders had not specifically envisioned, becoming integrated into the wider institutional ecology in ways the founders had not specifically planned. The same logic that produced Yale in 1701 as a response to Harvard's perceived drift produced Princeton in 1746 as a response to the Old Light dominance of Yale and Harvard. The logic produced Brown, Rutgers, and Dartmouth in the 1760s. It would shortly produce, across the early Republic, dozens of additional college foundations: Williams (1793) and Bowdoin (1794) in the New England Congregationalist tradition, Union College (1795) in the broader Reformed network, Middlebury (1800), Hamilton (1812), Amherst (1821), Wesleyan (1831), Trinity (1823), Lafayette (1826), Oberlin (1833). Each foundation followed the same logic: a specific religious community, identifying a need the existing network did not meet, chartering an institution that would meet the need. The institutional network of American higher education had a religious genealogy at every level of its development across the colonial and early Republican periods.

The second is the intellectual configuration the colleges had developed across the period from 1636 to 1776. The configuration was Reformed Protestant in its theological framework, classical in its curricular content, increasingly Enlightenment in its philosophical and political commitments across the eighteenth century. The configuration produced graduates competent in classical languages and rhetoric, mathematics and natural philosophy, moral philosophy and political theory, Reformed theology and biblical exegesis. The configuration was not narrowly clerical even when its primary purpose was clerical formation. It was a general education for the educated leadership of a Reformed-Protestant society, applicable across the range of occupations such a society required. The same education that produced Edwards as a theologian produced Madison as a constitutional architect; the same education that produced Witherspoon as a Presbyterian minister produced

Madison's classmate Aaron Burr Jr. as a vice president and a political operator of the new Republic. The configuration's range was a structural feature of what the colleges had been built to do. They had been built to produce educated leadership for a religious-political community whose religious and political dimensions were not sharply separated, and the education was equally appropriate to both dimensions because the community's intellectual life was integrated across them.

The third is the operational consequence of disestablishment for the institutional network. The colleges had been built to serve religious communities whose institutional power was, in many of the colonies, partly established through formal connections to the colonial political order. The state of Massachusetts maintained tax support for the Congregational establishment until 1833. The state of Connecticut maintained it until 1818. New Hampshire, Vermont, and the other New England states had similar arrangements that were progressively dismantled across the early nineteenth century. The middle and southern states, with the partial exception of Virginia's Anglican establishment, had operated with weaker formal establishments from the beginning. After the First Amendment of 1791 and the parallel state disestablishments, the colleges would have to operate as private institutions whose religious character was the choice of their trustees and their constituencies rather than a feature of the broader political order. The transition was not immediate, and the specific religious character of most of the colleges persisted into the middle of the nineteenth century. But the structural environment had changed. The colleges' continued operation now depended on their ability to attract students, faculty, donations, and broader institutional support in a market environment where religious establishment no longer guaranteed their position. Some would adapt successfully. Some would not. The pressure to adapt would, across the next century, drive the institutional transformations that Part IV will examine.

The colonial network had produced, by the founding of the Republic, the institutional infrastructure that would shortly serve a function the founders had not specifically planned. Harvard had been founded to produce ministers; it would shortly produce, alongside the ministers, the political and commercial leadership of New England. Yale had been founded to maintain Reformed orthodoxy against Harvard's drift; it would shortly produce, alongside the orthodox ministers, the political and commercial leadership of Connecticut and the broader Yankee diaspora. Princeton had been founded to produce New Side Presbyterian ministers; it would shortly produce James Madison and the founding generation's political architects. Brown, Rutgers, Dartmouth, William and Mary, Columbia, Pennsylvania — each had been founded to serve a specific religious community, and each had become, by the end of the colonial period, an institution whose operational reach extended beyond its founding constituency into the broader life of the colonies. The instruments the religious project had built were already, by 1776, doing work the religious project had not designed them to do.

The work would expand across the nineteenth century. The colleges would multiply, would diversify, would shed much of their explicit religious character, would develop new fields of

teaching and scholarship that their founders would not have recognized, would become embedded in the institutional life of the United States in ways that the seventeenth-century Puritans could not have conceived. The expansion is what Part IV will examine. The colonial network had built the foundation. The Republic, across its first century, would build on the foundation in directions the founders had not planned and could not have planned, and the institutional outcome — what the network had become by the period of the Civil War, by the period of the late nineteenth-century industrial economy, by the period of the early twentieth-century reform movements — would carry the trajectory the religious project had set in motion further than any of the founding generations had been able to see.

Part IV — The Long Transformation

I. The Colleges After the Republic

The Republic the founding generation built had, by the time of its first decades of operation, produced a constitutional environment the colonial colleges had not been founded to inhabit. The First Amendment's establishment clause prohibited Congress from establishing a national religion. The state constitutions adopted across the 1770s and 1780s — Virginia's of 1776, New Jersey's of 1776, Pennsylvania's of 1776, and the others — varied in their treatment of religious establishment but moved, across the next half-century, toward progressive disestablishment of the religious-political arrangements the colonial period had inherited. Virginia's Statute for Religious Freedom, drafted by Jefferson and enacted by Madison in 1786, was the most thoroughgoing of the early measures. Connecticut disestablished its Congregational establishment in 1818. Massachusetts, the longest holdout, eliminated its Congregational establishment in 1833. By the middle of the nineteenth century the formal connections between religious institutions and state political authority that had characterized the colonial settlement had been almost entirely dismantled.

This presented the colleges with a structural problem the founding generation had not specifically anticipated. The colonial colleges had been built within religious-political arrangements that supplied them with operational legitimacy and with material support — colonial tax revenues, exemptions from various civil burdens, ecclesiastical recognition that secured their position within the religious life of their constituencies. The disestablishment did not immediately eliminate any of these things. The colleges continued to receive sporadic state appropriations across the early decades of the Republic; their charters continued to grant them corporate status under state law; their religious character continued to be the operative feature of their institutional life across most of the early national period. But the structural environment had changed. The colleges were now operating in a political order that did not formally recognize religious establishment, and the question of whether the state could modify or revoke the colonial charters under which the colleges operated — the question of whether a state legislature, in a republican political order, possessed the authority to alter the institutional arrangements of corporations within its borders — was a question the colonial period had not had to answer.

The question reached the United States Supreme Court in 1819 in a case arising from a New Hampshire dispute over the management of Dartmouth College. The case carried implications that would extend across the entire subsequent development of American higher education.

II. Dartmouth College v. Woodward

Eleazar Wheelock had died in 1779, having served as Dartmouth's founding president since the college's 1769 chartering. His son John Wheelock succeeded him and served as president for thirty-six years. The younger Wheelock's administration was not happy. He quarreled with his trustees across the first decade of the nineteenth century over questions of religious orientation, financial management, and presidential authority. The dispute came to a head in 1815, when the trustees attempted to assert their authority against what they considered the president's high-handed conduct, and Wheelock responded by appealing to the New Hampshire legislature.

The legislature in 1816 was controlled by the Democratic-Republicans — Jefferson's and Madison's party — and the trustees were largely Federalist. The denominational background of the dispute was Congregational, but the political coloring was the Federalist-Republican factional alignment of the early Republic, with the trustees representing the older religious-political establishment of New Hampshire and the president allied with the rising Republican faction that wished to challenge that establishment. The legislature in June 1816 passed an act amending Dartmouth's 1769 charter to enlarge the board of trustees from twelve to twenty-one members, to authorize the governor to appoint the additional trustees, to create a board of overseers with veto authority over trustee decisions, and to rename the institution Dartmouth University. The effect of the act was to transfer effective control of the institution from the Federalist trustees to the Republican state administration.

The trustees refused to accept the act. They retained Daniel Webster, a Dartmouth graduate of 1801 who was emerging as one of the most able constitutional lawyers of the early Republic, to argue their case against William Woodward, the secretary and treasurer of the college who had transferred his loyalty to the new state-appointed board. The case went first to the New Hampshire courts, which ruled for Woodward, then on appeal to the United States Supreme Court, which heard oral arguments in March 1818. Webster's argument ran for four hours. He concluded with the passage that has been quoted in the legal literature since: "It is, sir, as I have said, a small college. And yet there are those who love it." Chief Justice John Marshall was reportedly moved to tears. The Court was not, at that point, ready to decide. The case was held over to the 1819 term.

Marshall delivered the Court's opinion on February 2, 1819. The decision was five to one for the college. The opinion ran for more than ninety pages and would become one of the longest and most consequential the Marshall Court issued. The legal reasoning operated through two principal propositions. The first was that the 1769 charter granted by King George III to the trustees of Dartmouth College was a contract within the meaning of Article I, Section 10 of the Constitution, which prohibited any state from passing any law "impairing the Obligation of Contracts." The charter, Marshall wrote, had every element of a contract: competent parties (the Crown and the trustees), consideration (the donors' contributions to the college's endowment), subject matter (the

corporate establishment of the college), and mutual obligation. The fact that the contract had been issued by the British Crown prior to the American Revolution did not, in Marshall's reading, dissolve the contract — the revolution had transferred the Crown's obligations to the state of New Hampshire as successor sovereign, but the obligations themselves had survived the transfer. The second proposition was that Dartmouth was a private corporation rather than a public one, and that the contract clause protected private corporate charters from state legislative interference. "By these means," Marshall wrote, "a perpetual succession of individuals are capable of acting for the promotion of the particular object, like one immortal being." The corporation was an "artificial being, invisible, intangible, and existing only in contemplation of law." It possessed the properties the charter had conferred on it. The state could not, by subsequent legislation, alter those properties without the corporation's consent.

The decision's immediate effect was to restore the original trustees to control of Dartmouth and to invalidate the New Hampshire legislation that had attempted to reorganize the institution. The decision's broader effect across the next century was to establish the constitutional foundation for the entire subsequent development of the American private corporation — including the corporate form within which the older religious colleges would operate as they transitioned across the nineteenth century from religious institutions embedded in colonial-period arrangements to private universities operating in the new constitutional order. The colleges that had been chartered under various colonial regimes would now operate as private corporations whose charters were constitutionally protected against state interference, whose internal governance was the responsibility of their self-perpetuating boards of trustees, and whose religious character was a matter of trustee policy rather than state establishment. The decision was, as Webster's co-counsel Joseph Hopkinson reportedly observed at the time, an outcome that would "secure corporations" across the broader American economy. It was also an outcome that would secure the colleges as private institutions whose subsequent transformation across the next century would proceed on the legal foundation Marshall had established.

The political-religious alignment of the case is worth noting. The Federalist trustees, defending the colonial charter against Republican legislative modification, were operating from a position aligned with the older religious-political establishment of New England. The Republican legislature, attempting to remake the college into a public institution responsive to elective political authority, was operating from a position aligned with disestablishment and the broader democratization of American institutional life. Marshall's decision sided with the Federalist trustees and the older establishment, but it did so on grounds that established the colleges as private rather than public institutions — which is to say, on grounds that placed the colleges outside the reach of the broader democratization that was reshaping American political and religious life. The colleges would be private corporations operating in a market environment. They would not be public institutions accountable to political authority. The legal framework for what they would become across the next century was, by 1819, in place.

III. The Antebellum Proliferation

The decades from 1819 through the Civil War saw an extraordinary multiplication of colleges across the United States. Approximately twenty-five colleges existed at the beginning of the period; approximately five hundred had been founded by 1860, of which perhaps two hundred fifty were operating with some institutional stability at the war's outbreak. The proliferation was not centrally planned. It was not the product of any state or federal educational policy. It was the institutional output of a particular structural configuration: a growing and geographically expanding population, organized into religious denominations that were themselves multiplying through the dynamics the colonial network had already demonstrated, requiring local institutional infrastructure for the formation of ministers and educated laity in regions where the older colleges were geographically inaccessible.

The denominational pattern reproduces the colonial logic across new territories. The Congregational and Presbyterian networks, which had built the colonial colleges of New England and the middle colonies, founded new colleges across the antebellum Midwest as the population expanded westward. Williams College had been chartered in 1793 in Massachusetts as a Congregationalist institution. Bowdoin followed in 1794 in Maine. Middlebury in Vermont in 1800. Hamilton in central New York in 1812. Amherst in Massachusetts in 1821. Wabash in Indiana in 1832. Marietta in Ohio in 1835. Knox in Illinois in 1837. Beloit in Wisconsin in 1846. Carleton in Minnesota in 1866. The institutions were the institutional expression of the Congregationalist-Presbyterian missionary enterprise across the expanding country, each one founded by a local cluster of ministers and laymen who had determined that their community required a college, each one operating with a curriculum drawn from the New England model the founders had brought with them.

The Methodist and Baptist denominations, which had grown rapidly across the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries through the camp-meeting revivals of the Second Great Awakening, produced their own institutional networks. Methodists chartered Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, in 1831; Emory University in Georgia in 1836; Dickinson College in Pennsylvania (acquired from Presbyterian origins) in 1834; Ohio Wesleyan in 1842; Northwestern in 1851; Vanderbilt in 1873. The Baptists chartered Colby in Maine in 1813; Colgate in New York in 1819; Denison in Ohio in 1831; Wake Forest in North Carolina in 1834; Mercer in Georgia in 1833; Bucknell in Pennsylvania in 1846; the University of Chicago in its first incarnation in 1857. The Episcopal Church chartered Trinity in Connecticut in 1823, Kenyon in Ohio in 1824. The German Reformed tradition produced Marshall College in Pennsylvania in 1836. The Disciples of Christ produced Bethany College in West Virginia in 1840. The Quakers produced Haverford in Pennsylvania in 1833, Earlham in Indiana in 1847, and Swarthmore in Pennsylvania in 1864. The Lutherans produced Gettysburg in Pennsylvania in 1832, Wittenberg in Ohio in 1845, and Capital University in Ohio in 1850.

The Catholic Church, whose American presence was small at the start of the period but expanded rapidly through Irish and German immigration across the middle decades of the century, produced its own institutional network. Georgetown had been chartered in 1789. St. Joseph's in Philadelphia in 1851. Holy Cross in Massachusetts in 1843. Fordham in New York in 1841. Notre Dame in Indiana in 1842. Villanova in Pennsylvania in 1842. Saint Louis University in Missouri in 1818. These institutions reproduced, on American soil, the Jesuit and other Catholic religious-order educational structures that had served Catholic populations in Europe and Latin America since the sixteenth century. The Catholic college network would expand widely across the second half of the nineteenth century with the further waves of Catholic immigration, producing by 1900 a parallel institutional system serving a community whose religious commitments were operating outside the Protestant configurations that had organized the earlier American development.

The numerical proliferation tells one story. The institutional stability of the founded colleges tells another. Of the five hundred or so antebellum college foundations, perhaps two-thirds failed within their first generation. The historian Donald Tewksbury's classic 1932 study identified four hundred twelve colleges as having been founded in the antebellum period in the sixteen states that became the United States by 1860; he concluded that approximately one hundred eighty-two had survived as functioning institutions by the time of his study a century later. The institutional mortality rate registered the financial and operational difficulty of college-founding in the period. A college required substantial endowment, a competent faculty, a regular flow of students whose families could pay the fees, denominational support from the founding constituency, and a geographical location that allowed the institution to draw its student body and to recruit its faculty. Many of the founded institutions lacked one or more of these requirements. They opened with inadequate funding, struggled across their first decades to attract students and faculty, and either failed outright or merged with stronger institutions in their region. What survived was a network whose density and geographical distribution exceeded anything the colonial period had produced, but whose individual institutions were operating at varying levels of academic seriousness and financial security across the period.

What the antebellum proliferation had established by the 1860s was the institutional precondition for the transformation that would shortly follow. A country whose higher education was conducted entirely through approximately a dozen colleges in 1789 had become, by 1860, a country whose higher education was conducted through approximately two hundred fifty institutions distributed across thirty-three states and operating under the auspices of a dozen religious denominations and a small number of state and municipal authorities. The institutional density was the foundation on which the post-Civil War transformation would build. The transformation would not multiply the institutions further; it would reorganize the institutions that existed, would create a small number of additional institutions on a new model, and would establish across the existing network a set of structural patterns that would, by 1900, have produced a recognizable American higher education system whose organizational logic the colonial founders

would not have understood.

IV. The Morrill Act and the Parallel System

The Civil War interrupted the trajectory the antebellum colleges had been following and supplied, through one specific piece of legislation, an institutional development that would proceed alongside the older network across the rest of the century. Justin Morrill of Vermont had been pressing for federal aid to agricultural and mechanical education across the late 1850s. His 1859 bill had passed Congress and been vetoed by President Buchanan on grounds that the federal government lacked constitutional authority to support state institutions of higher education. Morrill reintroduced the bill in early 1862. The political configuration had changed: the Southern states had withdrawn from Congress, the Republican administration of Abraham Lincoln had taken office, and the structural objections to federal involvement in education had been overtaken by the broader expansion of federal authority that the war was producing. Lincoln signed the Land Grant College Act on July 2, 1862.

The act's mechanism was specific. Each state received thirty thousand acres of federal land for each of its senators and representatives in Congress. The land could be sold by the state, the proceeds invested, and the resulting endowment used to support at least one college whose curriculum would include "agriculture and the mechanic arts," though without excluding other classical and scientific studies. Military training was required in the curriculum, an inclusion that reflected the wartime context of the legislation and that would later produce the Reserve Officers' Training Corps. The act's broader purpose, as Morrill had argued, was to make higher education accessible to a portion of the American population — the agricultural and mechanical classes — that the existing religious colleges had not historically served, and to produce educated leadership for the industrial and agricultural development of the country.

The act's implementation across the next several decades produced what became a parallel institutional network operating alongside the older religious colleges. Some states applied the land-grant funds to existing institutions: Yale's Sheffield Scientific School received Connecticut's land-grant designation in 1863; Rutgers received New Jersey's in 1864; Cornell University, which Ezra Cornell and Andrew Dickson White were chartering in New York as a non-denominational institution explicitly modeled on the new principles, received the New York land grant in 1865. Most states, however, established new institutions or applied the funds to fledgling state universities whose institutional development had begun before the war and that the land-grant funds materially accelerated. The University of Wisconsin (chartered 1848, land-grant designation 1866). The University of Michigan (chartered 1817 but operating with modest resources before the war, land-grant designation 1863 for the Michigan Agricultural College, now Michigan State). The University of Illinois (chartered as the Illinois Industrial University in 1867). The University of Minnesota (chartered 1851, reorganized under land-grant provisions in 1868). The University of

California (chartered 1868 under provisions that incorporated the land-grant funds). The Land Grant institutions of the South, mostly chartered after the Civil War. The Second Morrill Act of 1890 provided regular annual federal appropriations to support these institutions and required that states receiving federal funds not exclude students by race — a provision satisfied in the South through the establishment of seventeen separate land-grant institutions for African American students, which became the historically Black colleges and universities that included the Hampton Institute, Tuskegee, Howard, and others.

The land-grant network differed from the older religious colleges in several respects that would prove operationally consequential. Its institutions were public rather than private — chartered by state legislatures, supported principally through state appropriations and (after 1890) federal appropriations, accountable to state political authority in ways the religious colleges were not. Their curricula included practical and applied fields — agriculture, engineering, animal husbandry, mining, mechanical arts — that the religious colleges had not historically taught. Their student bodies were drawn from broader social constituencies, including the agricultural and working-class populations the religious colleges had not historically served. Their religious character was, by founding design, non-denominational, though most of them operated across their early decades with culturally Protestant assumptions that softened the formal non-establishment of religion at the level of institutional life.

The structural consequence of the land-grant network was that the United States, by the 1890s, had developed two parallel higher education systems: the older private religious-college network, descended from the colonial foundations through the antebellum proliferation, operating with denominational identities and a curriculum organized around the classical and Protestant inheritance; and the newer public land-grant network, operating with non-denominational identities, applied and scientific curricula, and accountability to state political authority. The two networks would, across the next half-century, increasingly converge in their educational programs, their academic standards, and their place in the broader institutional ecology of American higher education — but they would retain, into the present, the structural distinction between private and public institutions that their respective foundings had established. The convergence required, however, that the older religious colleges themselves undergo a transformation. The institutional model they had inherited from the colonial period — the four-year classical curriculum, the denominational identity, the small faculty of clerical and quasi-clerical scholars, the absence of graduate or professional schools — was a model the land-grant institutions were not following and that the broader development of American higher education across the late nineteenth century would shortly leave behind.

V. Eliot and the German Influence

The transformation began at Harvard. Charles William Eliot was inaugurated as the institution's twenty-first president on October 19, 1869. He was thirty-five years old. He had graduated from Harvard College in 1853, had taught chemistry at the institution for several years, had spent two years in Europe across 1863 to 1865 studying European educational systems, and had returned to teach at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before publishing in *The Atlantic Monthly* in February and March 1869 a two-part essay titled "The New Education: Its Organization." The essay argued that American higher education required serious reform along lines suggested by the European universities Eliot had observed — that the rigid prescribed curriculum of the American college needed to be replaced with a more flexible system permitting students to choose courses according to their interests and aptitudes, that the modern subjects of natural science, modern languages, history, and political economy required equal standing with the traditional classical curriculum, that the professional schools required upgrading to standards comparable to their European counterparts, and that the university required reorganization on principles that took seriously the research function alongside the teaching function. The essay was the document on the strength of which the Harvard Corporation elected Eliot to the presidency. He took office prepared to attempt what the essay had proposed.

His inaugural address registered the program. The university's purpose, Eliot declared, was the cultivation of "every kind of useful and inspiring power" in its students, and the institution's organization should be designed to produce that cultivation through the systematic application of European university methods to American conditions. The address signaled what would shortly be the central reform of Eliot's administration: the elective principle, under which the prescribed curriculum that had governed American collegiate education since the colonial period would be progressively replaced with a system permitting students to choose their courses across a much wider range of offerings. The reform was implemented across Eliot's first fifteen years. Senior course restrictions were eliminated in 1872, junior restrictions in 1879, sophomore restrictions in 1884, most freshman restrictions in 1885. By 1897 the required curriculum at Harvard had been reduced to a single year of freshman rhetoric. Students chose, from a catalog of several hundred courses, the program of study they wished to pursue.

The elective principle had institutional consequences the founders of the original curriculum could not have anticipated. The expansion of course offerings required a tenfold expansion of the faculty — Harvard's faculty grew from sixty in 1869 to approximately six hundred by Eliot's retirement in 1909. The expanded faculty required institutional space and material resources beyond what the older Harvard had required: new buildings, new laboratories, new library facilities, new endowment to support the operations. The expanded curriculum required new fields of academic competence beyond the classical and theological framework the colonial Harvard had operated within. New departments developed: history (formalized as a department in 1873), economics

(1879), Slavic languages, anthropology, geology, physics, chemistry, biology. The university began to grant doctoral degrees in 1872. The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences was formally organized in 1890. The professional schools were reformed along stricter academic lines: Christopher Columbus Langdell at the Law School, beginning in 1870, introduced the case method that would shortly dominate American legal education; Henry Pickering Bowditch at the Medical School, beginning in 1871, introduced laboratory instruction and clinical training that began the transformation of American medical education from its earlier proprietary character. The institution that Eliot had inherited in 1869 was a particular kind of New England college, operating with the curricular and institutional patterns the colonial inheritance had established. The institution he handed off in 1909 was a research university operating on much the model the German universities had developed across the nineteenth century, adapted to American conditions and grafted onto the older Anglo-American collegiate base.

The German influence on Eliot's program deserves specific attention because it operated across the broader transformation of American higher education in the late nineteenth century and because its content was different from the institutional inheritance the colonial colleges had operated with. The German universities — particularly Berlin (founded by Wilhelm von Humboldt in 1810), Göttingen, Heidelberg, Leipzig, Bonn — had developed across the nineteenth century a particular configuration that became the dominant model of advanced academic work in the Western world. The configuration was organized around the research seminar as its operational unit, the doctoral dissertation as its principal credential, and the proposition that the production of new knowledge through systematic investigation was the proper work of the senior scholar. Faculty were expected to conduct original research and to train graduate students in the methods of original research; teaching was conducted not primarily through textbook recitation and the prescribed curriculum but through the direct engagement of the senior scholar with advanced students working on problems of original investigation. The configuration had produced, across the nineteenth century, an extraordinary expansion of academic knowledge across the natural sciences, the humanities, and the emerging social sciences. American scholars who had studied at the German universities — and several thousand had done so by the 1880s, with the German Ph.D. operating as the standard credential for advanced academic work — returned to the United States convinced that the American higher education system needed to be reorganized along German lines if it was to produce work comparable to what the German institutions were producing.

Eliot's reforms at Harvard reflected this conviction. He had not himself studied in Germany, but he had observed the German system during his European travels and had read the published literature on its organization. His Harvard incorporated German elements into an institutional structure that retained considerable continuity with the older Anglo-American college: the undergraduate program remained, with the elective system permitting curricular flexibility within it; the professional schools were reformed but retained their position within the institutional structure; the graduate school was added as a new layer operating on essentially German lines. The hybrid

configuration — what subsequent scholars have called the American research university, combining undergraduate liberal-arts education with graduate professional and research training — was the institutional outcome. The configuration would shortly be replicated, with variations, across most of the older religious colleges and most of the newer state universities. It would become, by the early twentieth century, the dominant model of American higher education.

VI. Gilman's Hopkins and the New Universities

The American institution that adopted the German configuration most directly was the Johns Hopkins University, which received its charter in 1867 but did not open until 1876. The institution had been founded through the bequest of Johns Hopkins, a Quaker merchant and railroad investor of Baltimore who had died in 1873 leaving an estate of approximately seven million dollars — the largest single philanthropic bequest in American history to that date — divided between a hospital and a university whose specific institutional form was left to the trustees. The trustees consulted across the early 1870s with the leading university presidents of the country — Eliot of Harvard, Andrew Dickson White of Cornell, James Burrill Angell of Michigan, Noah Porter of Yale. The presidents all recommended the same candidate for the founding presidency: Daniel Coit Gilman, then president of the University of California at Berkeley, who had previously been a Yale professor and who had earlier been passed over for the Yale presidency in 1871 in favor of the more conservative Noah Porter. Gilman accepted the Baltimore appointment in 1875. He spent the next year in Europe studying the German universities and recruiting faculty. The institution opened with its first class on October 3, 1876.

What Gilman built at Baltimore was an institution organized from its foundation on the German graduate-research model. The undergraduate program was deliberately small. The institution's center of gravity was the graduate school, which from the outset offered doctoral degrees and which recruited its students through a fellowship system that paid the most able candidates to study under the institution's senior faculty. The faculty Gilman recruited was, by the standards of the period, extraordinary: Basil Lanneau Gildersleeve in classics, James Joseph Sylvester in mathematics, Ira Remsen in chemistry, Henry Newell Martin in biology, Herbert Baxter Adams in history, Richard T. Ely in political economy. Several had German doctorates or had studied in Germany; all were committed to original research as the proper work of the senior scholar. The institutional structure they operated within was organized to support that research: the research seminar was the principal teaching method at the graduate level; the journal-of-record was the principal mode of scholarly production, with Hopkins shortly establishing the *American Journal of Mathematics* (1878), the *American Chemical Journal* (1879), the *Studies in Historical and Political Science* (1882), the *American Journal of Philology* (1880), and others; the doctoral dissertation was the principal credential. The institution had been built, from the start, on the proposition that the proper work of a university was the production of original knowledge through systematic investigation, and that the

institutional structure should be designed to produce that work at the highest level the available resources permitted.

Within a generation of its opening Hopkins had supplied much of the senior faculty of the emerging American research universities. Woodrow Wilson took his Hopkins Ph.D. in political science in 1886; he would shortly join the faculty at Wesleyan, then move to Princeton, becoming Princeton's president in 1902 before his subsequent political career. John Dewey took his Hopkins Ph.D. in philosophy in 1884; he would shortly join the Michigan faculty, then move to Chicago, and across the early twentieth century would become one of the most influential figures in American philosophy and education. Frederick Jackson Turner took his Hopkins Ph.D. in history in 1890; he would shortly produce, at Wisconsin and later at Harvard, the frontier thesis that became the dominant interpretation of American historical development for the next half-century. Thorstein Veblen, Charles Beard, Josiah Royce, James McKeen Cattell, John R. Commons, and dozens of others did graduate work at Hopkins before joining faculties at other institutions across the country. The Baltimore institution functioned, across its first quarter-century, as the principal training ground for the American academic profession in its modern form.

Hopkins demonstrated that the German configuration could be installed in the United States and could produce, within a decade or two of its installation, work comparable to what the German universities were producing. The demonstration mattered. The wealthy donors and trustees who would shortly fund a new generation of American universities had a working model to reference. The model was followed, with variations, by several institutions that would shortly join Hopkins as the principal research universities of the country. Cornell had been chartered in 1865 by Ezra Cornell, a self-made millionaire who had made his fortune in telegraph stocks, and Andrew Dickson White, who became its founding president. Cornell's charter — "I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any study" — registered the broader principle the institution operated on, and its institutional structure combined a liberal-arts college with a strong scientific and engineering program and the New York land-grant designation. The institution would, across the late nineteenth century, develop into a major research university with strengths across the natural sciences and engineering. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, chartered in 1861 and operating from 1865, developed across the same period as a specialized institution in scientific and engineering education whose research output would shortly rival the more comprehensive universities.

The new private universities founded in the 1880s and 1890s were modeled directly on the Hopkins configuration. Stanford University was founded in 1885 by Leland Stanford, the railroad magnate and former governor of California, in memory of his son who had died at fifteen of typhoid; the institution opened in 1891 under the presidency of David Starr Jordan, an Indiana University biologist whom Stanford recruited for the position. The University of Chicago was founded in 1890 by the American Baptist Education Society with major funding from John D.

Rockefeller, who would across the next several decades supply approximately $35 million in benefactions to the institution; its founding president was William Rainey Harper, a Hebrew scholar from Yale who organized the institution on principles he had absorbed at Hopkins where he had taken his Ph.D. in 1875. Both institutions opened with the explicit ambition of operating as research universities at the highest level the available resources permitted. Both succeeded across their first generations in establishing themselves at that level.

The configuration these institutions established had, by 1900, become the recognizable form of the American research university. The Association of American Universities was founded in February 1900 with fourteen charter members: Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Pennsylvania, Princeton, Cornell, Johns Hopkins, Catholic University, Clark, Stanford, California, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Chicago. The institutions represented a configuration that would have been unrecognizable to the colonial founders. Five had been founded as religious colleges in the colonial period and had transformed across the nineteenth century into research universities. Two had been founded in the antebellum period (Catholic University, 1887). Six had been founded since the Civil War. Together they constituted the institutional core of what was, by 1900, recognizable as a national higher education system with significant capacity for original research, professional training across multiple fields, and the production of advanced academic credentials at international standards.

VII. What the Older Institutions Had Become

The transformation across the nineteenth century reshaped the older religious colleges as profoundly as it produced the new research universities. Yale under Timothy Dwight V, Princeton under James McCosh and Francis Patton and Woodrow Wilson, Columbia under Frederick A. P. Barnard and Seth Low, Penn under William Pepper, Brown under Elisha Benjamin Andrews, Dartmouth under William Jewett Tucker — each of the older colonial colleges underwent across the late nineteenth century a parallel reform program along lines similar to Eliot's at Harvard. The elective system, with local variations, became general. Graduate programs were established. Professional schools were upgraded. The faculty was expanded and increasingly recruited from the new research-trained Ph.D.s the German and Hopkins models had produced. The curriculum broadened across the modern subjects. The institutional ambition shifted from the training of clergy and educated laity for a denominational constituency to the production of advanced research and professional training for a broader national and increasingly international market.

The religious character of the older institutions softened across the same period. The shift was gradual rather than sudden, and it varied across institutions. Harvard had operated under explicitly Unitarian leadership since the early nineteenth century — the Hollis Professorship of Divinity had been awarded to a Unitarian in 1805, an action that had precipitated the orthodox Congregationalists' founding of Andover Theological Seminary in 1807 and that had registered Harvard's drift from its founding Reformed identity. By Eliot's presidency the institution's

Unitarianism was itself fading into a broader liberal-Protestant non-denominationalism that retained certain cultural features of the older religious life without requiring doctrinal adherence to any specific theological position. Compulsory chapel was abolished at Harvard in 1886. The institution's religious character was, by the early twentieth century, more a residue of its historical inheritance than an organizing principle of its operational life.

Yale's trajectory was similar but somewhat slower. The institution's Congregational character remained pronounced through the middle of the nineteenth century, but the founding of the Sheffield Scientific School in 1854 and its expansion across the subsequent decades opened a non-denominational scientific and engineering program alongside the older theological core. Timothy Dwight V, who served as president from 1886 to 1899, conducted at Yale a reform program closely modeled on Eliot's at Harvard. By the early twentieth century Yale was operating as a university whose religious character was a feature of its institutional history rather than its operational present. Princeton retained, under Wilson and his successors, somewhat more of the Presbyterian identity its founders had built it on, but the difference was one of cultural emphasis rather than operational substance. The institutional form had become broadly the same across all the older colleges.

The smaller religious colleges of the antebellum proliferation faced a more difficult adjustment. The model of higher education the research universities were establishing required resources — faculty, library, laboratories, endowment — that the smaller denominational colleges could not easily generate. Some adapted by maintaining their denominational identity and accepting a smaller and more specialized role within the broader higher education system: as undergraduate liberal-arts institutions whose students might go on to graduate or professional study at the larger universities. Others adapted by progressively de-emphasizing their denominational identity and competing for students and faculty in the broader market. A few attempted, with limited success, to maintain the older denominational college model into the twentieth century. The institutional consequence by 1920 was a stratified higher education system in which a small number of major research universities operated at the top of the institutional hierarchy, a larger number of solid undergraduate institutions and regional universities operated in the middle, and a still larger number of smaller institutions — many of them denominational colleges, many of them recently chartered normal schools and teachers' colleges — operated at the base. The stratification had not existed in 1860. It had been produced across the intervening sixty years by the transformation the research-university configuration had imposed on the older network.

The professional schools were the institutional sites where the transformation registered most operationally. The colonial colleges had not had professional schools in the modern sense. Legal training had been conducted through apprenticeship — the aspiring lawyer read law in the offices of an established practitioner and was admitted to the bar by examination — and medical training had been conducted through a combination of apprenticeship and short-course proprietary medical

schools whose academic standards had been notoriously low. The reform of the professional schools across the late nineteenth century — Langdell at Harvard Law, Bowditch and his successors at Harvard Medical, the Hopkins Medical School (founded 1893 with the Hopkins Hospital as its clinical base) that became the model for the Flexner Report's 1910 reorganization of American medical education — installed in the United States, across approximately four decades, the standard professional education that the country had not previously possessed. By the second decade of the twentieth century an American lawyer would be educated through a three-year program at a university law school, would be admitted to practice through bar examination after the completion of that program, and would be working in an institutional environment whose standards had been established by the Eliot-era reforms. The same configuration applied to American medical practice. The institutional consequence was the professionalization of two of the country's principal occupations through institutional structures the universities had developed across the second half of the nineteenth century.

What had been produced, by 1900, was the institutional core of what would become twentieth-century American higher education. The configuration was no longer recognizable as the older religious-college network the colonial founders had built. The configuration retained, in many of its institutions, residues of the older religious identity — Harvard's Veritas seal with its open Bibles, Yale's Lux et Veritas, Princeton's continuing connection to Presbyterian institutional life — but the residues operated as cultural inheritance rather than as the organizing principle of institutional life. The institutional life was organized around the production of original research, the training of graduate students through the German research-seminar model, the professional education of lawyers and physicians and engineers and other practitioners according to the standards the late-nineteenth-century reforms had installed, and the undergraduate liberal-arts education of an increasingly broad student body whose backgrounds were no longer primarily denominational and whose subsequent careers would unfold across an increasingly broad range of occupations across the new industrial and professional economy.

VIII. What the Long Century Had Produced

The institutional arc this case has been tracking had carried, across the long nineteenth century, an outcome the founders of the colonial colleges could not have foreseen and would not have specifically endorsed. The institutions they had built to produce ministers for a Reformed religious-political community had become institutions that produced, by 1900, a sizeable fraction of the senior leadership of an industrial society whose religious character was much diluted from what the founders had assumed and whose social and economic dynamics the founders could not have anticipated. The transformation had not been planned. It had proceeded through the operational decisions of successive generations of administrators, trustees, faculty, and donors, each responding to the conditions of their own period with the resources their predecessors had bequeathed them.

The structural features of the transformation deserve specific naming because the rest of the case will examine the consequences they produced across the twentieth century.

The first is the institutional continuity that survived the religious transformation. Harvard in 1900 was operating in many of the same buildings, with many of the same endowed positions, governed under essentially the same corporate charter, drawing on much the same financial resources that Harvard in 1700 had been operating under. The institutional continuity was material and legal. What had changed was the religious purpose the institution had been founded to serve. The institutional vehicle had survived the founding purpose by approximately two centuries and was operating, in its third century, under purposes the original founders had not specifically conceived. Dartmouth v. Woodward had supplied the legal framework for this continuity by establishing that the colleges were private corporations whose charters could not be revoked by state political authority. The colleges accordingly could outlast the religious-political arrangements within which they had been founded and could acquire new purposes through the decisions of their own self-perpetuating boards without requiring the consent of the political authorities through which their original chartering had been conducted.

The second is the institutional capacity that the colleges had developed across the nineteenth century. The capacity ran across multiple dimensions: financial (the endowments that had accumulated through donations across two centuries, supplemented by the new gifts of industrial wealth that flowed to the institutions across the late nineteenth century); intellectual (the faculties that had been recruited from across the country and increasingly from across the Atlantic, the libraries that had been built across generations, the laboratories and other research facilities that the post-Civil War period had produced); reputational (the standing the institutions had developed through their alumni networks, their published research, their professional schools, and their general position within the institutional ecology of the broader society); and political (the relationships the institutions had developed with state and federal authorities, the alumni who held political offices, the trustees who participated in the governing classes of their states and regions). The capacity had been produced through the long-term operational work of the institutions across two centuries. It could be applied, by 1900, to whatever purposes the institutions and their constituencies chose to apply it to.

The third is the structural position the colleges had come to occupy within the broader American institutional order. The Republic the founders had built had, across its first century, developed a national economy whose scale and industrial complexity exceeded what the colonial period could have imagined. The economy required educated managers, engineers, lawyers, scientists, physicians, and other professionals at scales that exceeded what the older training mechanisms (apprenticeship, proprietary schools, on-the-job formation) could supply. The colleges, by virtue of their institutional capacity and their accumulated legitimacy, were the institutions to which the economy turned for the production of this educated workforce. The role they came to play was not

the role they had been founded to play, but it was a role for which they were uniquely well-positioned, and the role across the twentieth century would become substantial.

The fourth is the relationship between the older private institutions and the newer public ones that had emerged through the land-grant network and the broader state-university development of the late nineteenth century. The private institutions, by virtue of their accumulated capacity and their continuing endowment growth, would across the twentieth century occupy positions at the top of the institutional hierarchy that would prove durable across the subsequent decades. Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Stanford, Chicago, Hopkins, and the other major private universities would maintain, into the present moment, structural positions in American institutional life that no public university quite matched. The state universities — Michigan, Wisconsin, California, the major state universities of the Big Ten and the broader regional systems — would build major capacity across the twentieth century and would in many specific fields rival or exceed the private institutions, but the structural advantages the private institutions had inherited from their colonial foundations and their nineteenth-century transformation would prove difficult to displace.

The fifth is the configuration the older institutions had come to occupy by 1900 with respect to the broader American religious life. The institutions had been founded to serve specific religious communities operating within a colonial settlement whose religious-political character had been the institutions' founding context. By 1900 the institutions were operating with much less religious specificity than they had been founded to operate with, but they were operating within an American society whose broader Protestant cultural inheritance remained pervasive. The relationship between the institutions and the religious life they had been built to serve had become, by 1900, more cultural than operational. The institutions retained Protestant cultural assumptions, recruited predominantly from Protestant constituencies, produced graduates who would predominantly occupy positions in the broader Protestant institutional life of the country, and maintained certain ceremonial and decorative features of their religious inheritance. They no longer required denominational affiliation from their students or faculty, no longer taught explicitly Reformed theology as the foundation of their curricula, and no longer functioned, in any operational sense, as the training institutions of specific religious denominations.

The configuration was not yet, in 1900, the secular configuration the institutions would occupy by the late twentieth century. That further transformation would proceed across the next several decades through dynamics the Eliot generation could not have specifically planned. But the structural foundation for the further transformation had been laid. The institutions had survived the loss of their founding religious purpose; they had developed institutional purposes that could operate independently of religious specificity; they had acquired the financial, intellectual, and reputational capacity to function as major institutions in the broader American order. The trajectory the religious project had set in motion in the seventeenth century had carried, by the dawn of the twentieth, an institutional outcome no one in the seventeenth century could have predicted and that

no one in the early twentieth century could have wholly foreseen.

The next part will examine what the twentieth century did with the configuration the nineteenth had produced.

Part V — The Ascendancy

I. The Configuration at the Turn of the Century

The Association of American Universities, founded in February 1900, registered the institutional consolidation the previous quarter-century had produced. Fourteen institutions represented at the founding meeting; five with colonial origins (Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Pennsylvania, Princeton); one from the antebellum period (Catholic University); the rest younger and oriented from their founding toward the research-university model. The fourteen institutions had collectively perhaps thirty thousand students enrolled across all programs; their combined endowments amounted to perhaps sixty million dollars; their faculties together numbered a few thousand. By the measures of an industrial society whose national product had passed twenty billion dollars in 1900 and whose population had passed seventy-five million, this was a modest collection of institutions with modest aggregate resources. What the institutions had accomplished was structural rather than quantitative. They had established a model of organized higher education whose patterns the broader American higher education system would, over the following century, progressively adopt. The American research university existed as a recognizable institutional form. Its dominant features — undergraduate liberal-arts education with elective curriculum, graduate education on the German doctoral model, professional schools organized within the university structure, faculty research as one of the institution's central functions, self-perpetuating boards of trustees managing private corporate forms or appointed boards managing state public forms — would shortly be the framework within which American higher education operated as a whole.

The institutional capacity these schools had accumulated by 1900 — the endowments, the libraries, the laboratories, the faculty, the reputations — would continue to grow across the twentieth century at a rate that exceeded the broader institutional capacity of the country itself. Harvard's endowment, approximately $13 million in 1900, would reach approximately $50 million by 1925, approximately $200 million by 1950, $4.7 billion by 1990, $36 billion by 2020, and approximately $53 billion by 2024. The growth was a function partly of the institution's continuing operational success in attracting donations, partly of the investment returns on the endowment's existing assets, partly of the broader expansion of American wealth across the century. The pattern was similar at Yale, Princeton, Stanford, and the other major private universities. The institutions had built the foundation across the colonial and nineteenth-century periods. They would build the superstructure across the twentieth century. By the early twenty-first century the major private research universities would together control approximately three hundred billion dollars in endowment assets — a position in American institutional life that no group of institutions outside

government and the largest financial firms quite matched.

What this Part will track is what the institutions did with this accumulated capacity across the twentieth century, and what the configuration produced by the second decade of the twenty-first century looks like when set against the religious project the colonial founders had instituted. The arc carries forward the institutional logic the earlier Parts established. The colleges had been built by religious projects to solve religious problems. By 1900 they had outlived their founding religious purposes and had developed institutional capacities the founders had not specifically conceived. Across the twentieth century the institutions would apply that capacity to new purposes — purposes that emerged out of the conditions the century itself produced, and that the older religious foundations did not specifically endorse or prohibit. The institutional vehicle, having been built for one purpose and adapted to another, would shortly be adapted to a third.

II. The Protestant Establishment and Its Containment

The first three decades of the twentieth century saw the older Protestant cultural inheritance of the universities consolidate into what subsequent scholars would call the Protestant Establishment — a configuration of institutional, social, and political networks operating across the country's elite institutions and producing, through their interconnections, the recognizable American ruling class of the period from roughly 1900 to 1960. The configuration was operationally formidable. The graduates of Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and a few peer institutions occupied disproportionate positions in the country's law firms, investment banks, diplomatic service, federal government, corporate boards, and intellectual life. The institutions had become not merely producers of educated professionals but the formative environments through which a particular kind of American leadership was being shaped, and the shaping was conducted within cultural assumptions that retained considerable continuity with the older Protestant inheritance even as the explicitly religious content of the institutions had attenuated.

The configuration's social mechanisms operated through admissions, residential life, extracurricular institutions, and alumni networks. By the second decade of the century the older colleges had developed admissions systems that combined formal academic requirements with a series of less formal mechanisms for selecting the particular kind of student the institutions sought to educate. Geographic distribution requirements favored applicants from prep schools whose graduates the institutions had been receiving for generations. Character recommendations from clergy, headmasters, and alumni filtered applicants through networks the institutions had cultivated. Athletic preference admitted candidates whose contributions to college life ran beyond the academic. Residential arrangements — the residential college system at Yale (organized 1933) and Harvard (organized 1930), the eating clubs at Princeton — sorted students into social configurations that produced the network connections from which subsequent careers would be built. The configuration was effective at producing what it was designed to produce.

The configuration was also, by design, exclusionary. The Jewish immigration of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had produced, by the 1910s and 1920s, a sizable Jewish American population whose academic ambitions exceeded what the existing configuration was prepared to accommodate. Jewish applicants to the major Eastern colleges, having generally been educated in public high schools rather than Protestant prep schools and having generally lacked the alumni connections the older configuration valued, were now seeking admission in numbers that the older institutional culture considered alarming. Columbia, the most accessible of the major Eastern colleges by virtue of its New York City location, had reached approximately forty percent Jewish enrollment by the early 1920s. Harvard's Jewish enrollment had reached approximately twenty-two percent by 1922, up from about six percent in 1908. Yale's had reached about thirteen percent, Princeton's about four percent.

The administrative response was the construction of admissions mechanisms that would limit Jewish enrollment without explicitly stating the limitation. Abbott Lawrence Lowell, Harvard's president from 1909 to 1933, proposed an explicit quota in 1922 — a fixed percentage of Jewish students above which admissions would be capped — but the proposal generated public controversy that forced its withdrawal. What Harvard installed instead, across the next several years, was a system of "holistic" admissions in which the institution's admissions office acquired broad discretionary authority to weigh non-academic factors against academic ones. Character, leadership, personality, fitness for the residential community — these became the operative criteria, and they could be applied without explicit mention of religious or ethnic identity in ways that produced the desired demographic result. Yale and Princeton adopted similar systems across the 1920s. Geographic distribution requirements were introduced that limited the proportion of students from any single geographic area, reducing the proportion who would come from the urban Northeast where Jewish populations were concentrated. Legacy preferences — admissions advantages for applicants whose fathers had attended the institution — were systematized at Dartmouth in 1922 and at other peer institutions shortly thereafter, producing a structural advantage for applicants whose family connections to the older configuration the institutions wished to preserve.

A 1922 Yale Board of Admissions memorandum titled "Memorandum on Jewish Representation in Yale" observed, in language whose directness the institutions would shortly learn to avoid, that the only "successful" criteria devised by any university to exclude Jewish students had done so through "non-intellectual requirements" calibrated to circumvent academic qualifications. The memorandum's catalog of peer-institution practices — Columbia's psychological tests, Princeton's reliance on prep-school recommendations, Harvard's developing holistic criteria — registered the technical methods through which the desired demographic outcomes were being pursued. Yale Medical School's dean Milton Winternitz issued internal instructions in the 1930s that read, in their entirety: "Never admit more than five Jews, take only two Italian Catholics, and take no blacks at all." Across the major medical schools (Cornell, Columbia, Pennsylvania, Yale) similar restrictions were operating across the 1930s. Jonas Salk was rejected by Cornell, Columbia,

Pennsylvania, and Yale; he enrolled at New York University. Richard Feynman was turned away from Columbia College and enrolled at MIT. The pattern was systematic.

The configuration's exclusionary mechanisms were not solely directed at Jewish applicants. Black applicants were excluded almost entirely, with Harvard, Yale, and Princeton enrolling at most a handful of Black students in any given year through the 1940s. Women were excluded from the major Eastern undergraduate colleges entirely; the development of women's colleges — Vassar (1861), Smith (1871), Wellesley (1875), Bryn Mawr (1885), Mount Holyoke (founded as a seminary in 1837 and chartered as a college in 1888), Radcliffe (1894 as the "Harvard Annex"), Barnard (1889 as the Columbia annex) — supplied parallel institutions for the education of women whose academic ambitions matched those of the men attending the older colleges, but did not address the question of whether the major coeducational institutions of the future would admit women on equal terms. Catholic applicants from elite Catholic families were sometimes admitted, but the broader Catholic population — particularly Irish and Italian immigrants and their American-born children — faced restrictions comparable in operation if not always in formal mechanism to those applied to Jewish applicants. The configuration was preserving a specific kind of American leadership — one whose religious, ethnic, and cultural composition matched the Protestant inheritance the institutions had been built within — against the demographic pressure of an increasingly diverse American population.

The First World War interrupted nothing. The institutions emerged in 1919 with their cultural configurations intact and their position in American institutional life consolidated by the war's reorganization of the federal government, in which alumni of the major universities had served at every senior level. The Second World War would be more disruptive.

III. The War and the Federal Turn

The mobilization for the Second World War transformed the relationship between the federal government and the major American research universities in ways that the prior generation could not have anticipated. The transformation operated through two principal mechanisms: the GI Bill, which brought millions of returning veterans into institutions whose enrollment had previously been a fraction of that scale; and the federal research apparatus, which made the universities into the operational sites of the country's wartime and postwar scientific work.

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 — the GI Bill — was signed by Franklin Roosevelt on June 22, 1944, sixteen days after D-Day. The act provided returning veterans with tuition support of up to five hundred dollars per academic year (generous relative to most institutions' fees, which at most of the public universities and many private ones came in below that amount), plus a monthly stipend for living expenses. The American Legion had pressed the legislation through Congress on the proposition that returning veterans had earned the right to

civilian readjustment support and that the country had an obligation to provide it. The educational provisions were not the principal item the Legion had pressed for — home loans, business loans, and unemployment insurance had been the more visible elements of the bill in the legislative debate — but they would prove the most institutionally consequential. By 1947, half of all American college students were veterans on GI Bill support. By the time the original program ended in 1956, approximately 2.3 million veterans had used the educational benefits to attend college, with another 3.5 million using the benefits for vocational and trade education and 3.4 million for on-the-job training. The combined total — 7.8 million veterans receiving some form of educational benefit — represented an investment in human capital that no prior government program in American history had matched.

The institutional consequences were immediate. American college enrollment, which had stood at approximately 1.5 million in 1940, reached approximately 2.7 million by 1949. The institutions absorbed the increase by adding faculty, building new dormitories, opening new branch campuses, expanding existing programs. The expansion was not uniform across the institutional hierarchy. The major private universities expanded modestly relative to their existing scale. The major public universities expanded greatly. The state college systems and the regional public institutions expanded the most dramatically — California's state colleges and junior colleges, the state universities of the Midwest and the South, the urban public colleges of the Northeast. By 1950 the institutional scale of American higher education had been transformed. The configuration that had existed in 1940 — a relatively small number of major universities serving a relatively small population of college-going students — had become a much larger configuration serving a much broader cross-section of the American population.

The Cold War extended what the GI Bill had begun. Vannevar Bush, an MIT engineer who had directed the Office of Scientific Research and Development across the war, delivered to President Truman in July 1945 the report titled *Science, the Endless Frontier*. The report argued that federal support for basic scientific research at universities should be a permanent feature of postwar American institutional life. Wartime experience had demonstrated, Bush argued, that the country's wartime scientific achievements — radar, the proximity fuze, antibiotics, the Manhattan Project — had been conducted largely by university researchers who would not have been available for the work had the universities not maintained the scientific capacity the federal government had then mobilized. The country could not, in Bush's reading, rely on European basic science to feed its applied development as it had across the prewar period; the war had destroyed Europe as a source of fundamental research; American national security and American economic prosperity would now require American basic science, and the institutional location for that science was the American research universities. The federal government should support the universities' basic research with sustained appropriations administered through a national foundation governed by scientific peer review rather than political direction.

The National Science Foundation was eventually established in 1950, five years after Bush's report, with a more limited scope than Bush had originally proposed. By then, however, much of what Bush had argued for was being implemented through other channels: the Office of Naval Research, established 1946; the Atomic Energy Commission, established 1946; the National Institutes of Health, expanded greatly across the late 1940s; the Department of Defense's research operations; the intelligence agencies' funding of language, area-studies, and political-science programs at the major universities. By 1960 federal research funding to American universities exceeded one billion dollars per year. By 1968 it exceeded three billion. The expansion supplied the financial foundation on which the major research universities built across the postwar period the laboratories, the graduate programs, and the research output that would shortly position them at the front of the global scientific enterprise.

The federal research funding came with specific structural features. It was directed primarily to a relatively small number of major research universities — perhaps fifty to one hundred institutions, with a much smaller number receiving the bulk of the funds. It was concentrated in the natural and physical sciences and the engineering fields, with much smaller appropriations to the social sciences and the humanities. It was administered through competitive peer-reviewed grants whose application and management required institutional capacities (sponsored research offices, grant administration, indirect cost recovery) that the older institutional structures had not been built around. The institutions that developed those capacities — Harvard, MIT, Berkeley, Stanford, Michigan, Wisconsin, Chicago, Hopkins, Cornell, Caltech, Columbia, Penn, Princeton, Yale, and a handful of others — became the country's research universities in the form in which the second half of the twentieth century would know them. The institutions that did not develop those capacities remained in the broader higher education system but no longer functioned as research universities at the new operational scale.

What this configuration accomplished, by approximately 1965, was the transformation of the major American research universities into national institutions whose operational dependence on federal funding was now structural and whose institutional identity now incorporated, alongside the older private-corporate identity established by *Dartmouth*, a quasi-public role in the country's scientific and technical work. The universities remained legally private corporations operating under their original charters. Their actual operational life now included major federal funding for research, deep federal involvement in student aid, growing federal regulation of admissions and personnel practices, and clear federal expectation that the universities' research output would contribute to national security and economic development priorities the federal government had identified. The configuration was hybrid. The legal form remained private. The operational reality was largely public, in the sense that the institutions' work was being conducted with public funds in pursuit of purposes the federal government had named.

IV. The Great Society and the Mass University

The Higher Education Act of 1965, signed by Lyndon Johnson on November 8, 1965, at Texas State University, extended the federal involvement from research funding to student access. The act established a framework of federal student grants (eventually consolidated as the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant, renamed the Pell Grant after 1980) and federally guaranteed student loans that would make higher education financially accessible to students whose families could not afford to pay tuition out of current income. The act was, in its specific provisions, the educational counterpart to the broader Great Society legislation Johnson was pressing across 1964 and 1965 — Medicare, Medicaid, the Voting Rights Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the immigration reform of 1965. The Higher Education Act's place in this configuration was specific: it would democratize access to higher education by removing the financial barrier that had restricted attendance to students whose families could afford to pay.

The act's institutional consequences played out across the following two decades. American college enrollment, which had stood at approximately 4 million in 1960, reached approximately 8 million by 1970, 11 million by 1980, 13 million by 1990, 18 million by 2010. The expansion ran across all sectors of the institutional system: the major private universities expanded their student bodies modestly, the major public universities expanded heavily, the regional public universities expanded the most, and the community college system expanded from a relatively minor institutional form in 1960 to enrolling approximately 40 percent of American undergraduates by the 1980s. The country's higher education system had become a mass institution — a system whose enrollments included roughly a third of all young Americans at any given time, whose graduates included roughly a third of the working-age population, and whose institutional scale operated at the level of the major industries of the country.

The Higher Education Act's effect on the major private research universities was less dramatic than its effect on the broader system but was operationally consequential. The institutions began to admit students whose families could not pay full tuition, supported through a combination of federal grants and loans and institutional financial aid drawn from endowment income. Harvard's financial aid program, which had been modest through the 1950s, expanded greatly across the 1960s and 1970s, and by the 1970s the institution was committing that no admitted undergraduate would be turned away for inability to pay. The shift was rhetorical as much as material; the institution's actual financial aid expenditure remained a small fraction of its endowment income, and the proportion of students from families in the country's lower income deciles remained low. What mattered was the institutional self-presentation. The institution had become, by self-description, an institution serving educational merit rather than inherited wealth, and the financial aid program supplied the operational mechanism for the self-presentation.

The cultural transformations of the 1960s ran across the universities at the same time. The civil rights movement's pressure on higher-education admissions, organized through the federal civil-rights enforcement apparatus that emerged across the late 1960s, produced an admissions reform of which the universities themselves became active proponents. Harvard's admission of African American students, which had averaged a handful per year through the 1950s, grew across the 1960s and reached approximately 7 percent of each entering class by the early 1970s. The pattern was similar at Yale, Princeton, and the other major institutions. Women's admission to the major Eastern undergraduate colleges, which had remained restricted into the 1960s, opened across the late 1960s and early 1970s: Yale and Princeton went coeducational in 1969, Brown in 1971, Harvard and Radcliffe effectively merged in admissions in 1975 and formally in 1999. By the mid-1970s the demographic composition of the major American research universities looked profoundly different from what it had looked like in 1955.

The composition included, by self-conscious institutional design, a representation of women, of African Americans, of Asian Americans (whose immigration the 1965 Immigration Act had begun to permit at much higher rates than the prior quota system had allowed), of Hispanic Americans (likewise), and of students from a broader range of economic and geographic backgrounds than the older configuration had served. The transformation was extensive in operational terms but operated within structural continuities the older configuration had established. The institutions retained their legal forms, their endowments, their alumni networks, their residential and curricular arrangements, their faculty governance structures. What had changed was the demographic identity of the students passing through these structures. The structures themselves continued. The students passing through them were now drawn from a different range of American backgrounds, were now educated alongside one another in residential settings the older configuration had not designed for this kind of diversity, and were now entering, on graduation, a national leadership configuration whose demographic composition the institutions were now actively reshaping.

The shift in admissions criteria operated through the same "holistic" mechanism the institutions had developed in the 1920s for the exclusion of Jewish students. The mechanism's content had changed; its operational form had not. Admissions offices retained broad discretionary authority over the weighting of academic, extracurricular, geographic, character, and demographic factors. The criteria the institutions wished to advance — racial diversity, geographic diversity, athletic accomplishment, legacy connections, "personality" — could be applied through the same admissions structures that had earlier been used to exclude Jewish applicants. The 1920s holistic-admissions reform had built the structural machinery. The 1960s and 1970s admissions reform redirected the machinery toward different demographic goals. The structural continuity is worth noting because the institutional mechanism the universities had built for one purpose proved adaptable, four decades later, to a different and in many respects opposite purpose. The mechanism survived its founding purpose. It was redirected. It continued to operate as the principal instrument of the institutions' demographic engineering.

V. The Endowment Era

The financial expansion of the major private universities across the second half of the twentieth century requires specific attention because it produced, by the second decade of the twenty-first century, an institutional configuration whose operational scale exceeded what the older institutions had imagined and whose structural position in American institutional life is genuinely without precedent in the country's prior history.

Harvard's endowment supplies the clearest record of the trajectory. The endowment stood at approximately $200 million in 1950. It grew to approximately $1 billion by 1976. It grew to approximately $5 billion by 1990. It grew to approximately $20 billion by 2000. It grew to approximately $36 billion by 2008, dropped to $26 billion during the 2008–2009 financial crisis, recovered to $32 billion by 2015, reached $41 billion by 2019, and stood at approximately $53 billion by mid-2024. The growth was a product of several factors operating simultaneously: continued donations from alumni and others, supported by the institution's accumulated prestige; investment returns on the existing endowment, managed across the second half of the twentieth century by an increasingly sophisticated investment apparatus whose practices the broader investment industry would shortly emulate (David Swensen at Yale's investment office, beginning in 1985, developed the "Yale model" of endowment investment that the other major universities subsequently adopted); the broader expansion of American financial assets over the period, which lifted endowment values along with the broader financial economy; and the tax-exempt status of the institutions, which meant that endowment returns compounded without the tax drag affecting ordinary investment portfolios.

Yale's endowment trajectory paralleled Harvard's, reaching approximately $40 billion by 2024. Princeton's reached approximately $34 billion. Stanford's reached approximately $36 billion. MIT's reached approximately $25 billion. Together with the slightly smaller endowments of the other major private universities (Penn, Columbia, Chicago, Hopkins, Northwestern, Notre Dame, Duke, Cornell, Brown, Dartmouth), the major private research universities controlled approximately $300 billion in endowment assets by 2024 — a sum approximately equal to the combined GDP of Finland and Portugal, or the market capitalization of any single but the very largest American corporations. The state universities had built their own endowments at smaller but still considerable scale (University of California system, $20 billion; Texas A&M's endowment, fed by oil-and-gas revenue from university lands, $20 billion; Michigan, $18 billion; Virginia, $15 billion). The institutional concentration of capital that the higher education system had accumulated by the second decade of the twenty-first century was a feature of American institutional life that the colonial founders, and indeed the late-nineteenth-century reformers, could not have specifically envisioned and would not have specifically endorsed.

The capital was institutionally deployed for purposes the founders would have recognized only partially. A portion supported the institutions' financial aid programs. A portion supported endowed faculty positions and the salaries of the research faculty whose work the institutions' reputations depended on. A portion supported the libraries, laboratories, museums, and other physical apparatus the institutions had accumulated. A portion supported athletic programs and student life facilities whose scale and quality exceeded what most national populations would have recognized as appropriate for university operations. A portion was held in reserve, growing through investment returns, available for future operational expansion and protected against the possibility of future financial reverses. The institutions had become, by the early twenty-first century, not merely educational organizations but financial entities of major scale, with investment operations rivaling those of major pension funds and sovereign wealth funds, with real estate holdings spread across multiple jurisdictions, with international operations conducted through a variety of partnerships and subsidiaries.

The institutional autonomy that *Dartmouth v. Woodward* had established two centuries earlier proved, in the new financial environment, operationally significant in ways the Marshall Court could not have foreseen. The institutions could deploy their accumulated capital according to their own institutional priorities, accountable to no political authority external to their self-perpetuating boards of trustees, subject to the tax-exempt treatment of charitable organizations under federal law but otherwise free of the kinds of regulatory constraints that operated on commercial corporations. The legal status the institutions occupied — private, eleemosynary, non-profit, tax-exempt — placed them outside the institutional categories the broader American polity had developed for the regulation of large concentrations of wealth. The colleges had been founded as religious institutions, had transformed into private research universities, had absorbed enormous federal funding for research and student aid, and had accumulated capital at scales that placed them among the country's larger economic entities — while remaining, throughout, private corporations whose internal affairs were the responsibility of their trustees and whose external accountability was minimal.

VI. The Twenty-First Century Configuration

What the institutions had become, by approximately 2015, was something the operational language of the older religious or academic categories no longer captured. They were educational institutions in the sense that they admitted undergraduate students and conducted teaching programs across the disciplines. They were research institutions in the sense that they conducted scientific and scholarly work whose output the broader academic profession assessed. They were professional training institutions in the sense that their professional schools — law, medicine, business, public policy, engineering, education, divinity, design — produced the credentialed professionals who staffed the country's law firms, hospitals, financial institutions, technology companies, consulting firms, government agencies, and senior management positions across the broader institutional landscape. They were charitable organizations under federal tax law. They were financial institutions managing large endowment portfolios. They were employers of tens of thousands of workers each, conducting operations spread across multiple campuses and international affiliations. They were cultural institutions whose museums, libraries, performing arts programs, and athletic teams produced output that operated within the country's broader cultural life. They were political institutions whose alumni occupied significant positions across the federal government, the major media, the federal judiciary, the financial industry, and the broader configuration of American leadership.

The graduates of the major institutions, by the early twenty-first century, were being placed into specific career trajectories whose configuration the older religious foundations did not specifically anticipate. The reported career outcomes are documented and worth citing precisely. Of Harvard's senior undergraduates entering the workforce in 2007, the year of the financial-sector peak before the 2008 crisis, approximately 47 percent took positions in finance and consulting. The proportion dropped during the recession years that followed and reached approximately 29 percent by 2011, then rebounded somewhat across the 2010s and stabilized at approximately 30 percent across the late 2010s and early 2020s. Adding the technology sector — by the late 2010s a comparable destination for Harvard graduates — the financial-services, consulting, and technology destinations together accounted for roughly half of the entering workforce in each graduating class. The remaining graduates distributed across medicine (with graduate medical school the immediate destination for many), graduate education (law school, doctoral programs in academic disciplines), teaching (typically through the Teach For America program for two-year placements before subsequent careers), and other occupations. The pattern was similar at Yale, Princeton, Stanford, and the other major institutions. Harvard Business School's MBA graduates, who completed two-year graduate programs after several years of post-undergraduate employment, distributed across consulting (approximately 25 percent of recent classes), finance (approximately 30 percent), technology (approximately 20 percent), and the remaining sectors. The median starting salary for recent HBS graduates exceeded $180,000, with total compensation including bonuses commonly

exceeding $220,000.

The institutional logic of these career destinations is worth registering specifically. The graduates were not principally entering occupations that produced new physical goods, conducted scientific research, taught the next generation, or served the country's broader economic and social life through the production of professional services that the older economy had required. They were principally entering occupations that managed financial assets, advised large organizations on strategic and operational questions, developed and managed technology platforms whose operational characteristics the broader population was using, and conducted the senior management of large corporations whose products and services the country's economy was producing. The graduates were, in operational terms, the senior managerial class of the early-twenty-first-century American economy — the people who allocated capital, who made the strategic decisions for the major corporations, who designed and managed the technology platforms that mediated much of contemporary social and economic life, and who operated, through their concentrated positions in a relatively small number of major firms, the institutional levers through which the broader economy was being managed.

The relationship between this senior managerial class and the older Reformed religious commitments that had founded the universities was, by 2024, much attenuated. The graduates were no longer being educated within a Protestant religious framework that supplied operational guidance for their professional lives. The institutions no longer required religious affiliation from their students or faculty, no longer taught Reformed theology as the foundation of their curricula, no longer functioned as the training institutions of any specific religious tradition. The institutions' chapels, where they still operated, served small voluntary congregations whose participation was a minor feature of student life rather than its operational center. The institutions' divinity schools, where they still existed (Harvard's, Yale's, Princeton's, Chicago's), had become small graduate departments studying religion as an academic subject rather than producing ministers for any specific denominational community. The Reformed theological commitments that had organized the seventeenth-century Massachusetts founding of Harvard, that had shaped Yale's eighteenth-century response to Harvard's drift, that had supplied Witherspoon's Princeton with its formative configuration for the American founding generation — these were now elements of institutional history, preserved in the institutions' ceremonial functions and their historical archives but no longer operating as the substance of institutional life.

What the institutions did continue to teach, across the undergraduate liberal-arts curriculum that remained the organizing framework of their bachelor's-degree programs, was a configuration of intellectual commitments whose specific contents had shifted across the twentieth century but whose structural role in the institutions' work remained continuous with the older educational mission. The institutions taught the country's senior leadership class how to think, write, analyze, communicate, and operate within complex institutions. The specific subject matter through which

this teaching was conducted varied: classical languages and theology in the seventeenth century; classics, mathematics, and natural philosophy in the eighteenth; the modern languages, history, and social sciences in the nineteenth and twentieth; the contemporary configuration of humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and applied fields in the twenty-first. The continuity ran through the institutional function rather than the specific curricular content. The institutions had been built to form a particular kind of educated leadership. They had continued, across the centuries of their transformations, to form a particular kind of educated leadership. The kind being formed had changed across the centuries with the changes in what the broader society required of its leadership. The institutions' role in producing the leadership had remained consistent.

VII. The Trajectory and Its Cost

The institutional outcome the trajectory had produced by 2024 was the configuration the Believers' Republic had set in motion four centuries earlier. The Reformation Parliament had passed the Henrician break in the 1530s. The dissolution had created a Protestant property regime. The Puritan faction had been driven from England in the 1630s. The Massachusetts Bay Colony had built Harvard in 1636 because, as its founders wrote in 1643, it could not bear to leave "an illiterate ministry to the churches when our present ministers shall lie in the dust." Yale had followed in 1701 to maintain Reformed orthodoxy against Harvard's drift. The Great Awakening had fractured the New England Reformed coalition and produced Princeton, Brown, Rutgers, Dartmouth. Witherspoon at Princeton had formed James Madison in the 1770s. The colleges had survived disestablishment through *Dartmouth v. Woodward* in 1819. The antebellum proliferation had built five hundred new institutions, of which approximately two hundred survived. The Morrill Act had created the parallel public network. Eliot had transformed Harvard along German lines. Gilman had built Hopkins as the first dedicated research university. The Association of American Universities had registered the consolidated form by 1900. The Protestant Establishment had built and then progressively transformed itself across the twentieth century. The federal turn had made the institutions partly public in their operational substance while leaving them private in their legal form. The endowment expansion had given them financial scale unprecedented in the country's history. The graduates were now, in their majority, occupying the senior management of the country's industries.

The trajectory had carried, across four centuries, an institutional outcome the founders of any specific stage along the way could not have foreseen and would not have specifically endorsed. John Winthrop, drafting *A Modell of Christian Charity* aboard the *Arbella* in 1630, had imagined a settlement that would be "as a city upon a hill" — a community whose religious-political life would demonstrate to England and to Europe what the further reformation could accomplish when conditions permitted its operation. The institutions Winthrop's generation built had not, in the long run, demonstrated what the further reformation could accomplish. They had demonstrated what an

institutional vehicle, built for one purpose and adapted to a series of subsequent purposes, could become across the centuries of its operation. The vehicle had been useful to the Puritan founders for the purpose they had built it for. It had been useful to the colonial-period factions that had multiplied it for their factional purposes. It had been useful to the founding generation of the Republic for the formation of constitutional leadership. It had been useful to the antebellum denominations for the institutional reproduction of their religious communities. It had been useful to the nineteenth-century reformers for the transformation of American intellectual life. It had been useful to the twentieth-century federal government for the production of scientific research and educated professionals. It had been useful to the twenty-first-century financial and managerial economy for the production of the leadership class through which that economy was being managed.

Each user of the vehicle had used it for their specific purposes. None of them had built the vehicle. They had inherited it from their predecessors, adapted it to the conditions of their period, and passed it on to their successors. The vehicle had survived its founding purpose by approximately three centuries and was now operating, in its fifth century of institutional life, under purposes that the founders had not specifically anticipated and that, in many of their specific operational features, the founders would not have specifically endorsed had they been able to inspect them. The institutions had become what the conditions of their successive periods had made of them, and the conditions of their successive periods had been beyond any single generation's capacity to design.

This is what apex operators do when they solve immediate problems by building institutions. Henry VIII had a marital and financial problem in the 1520s. Cromwell built a legislative apparatus to solve it. The apparatus survived Henry, survived Cromwell, and shaped the constitutional structure of England across the following four centuries. The Puritan founders had a religious problem in the 1620s. They built a settlement and an educational system to solve it. The settlement and the system survived the Puritan founders, survived the Reformed religious commitments that had organized them, and shaped the institutional structure of American higher education across the following four centuries. Loyola had a Counter-Reformation problem in the 1530s. He and his successors built an educational network to solve it. The network survived Loyola, survived the specific Counter-Reformation conditions that had organized it, and shaped Catholic European elite formation across the following two centuries before its eighteenth-century suppression. The pattern is consistent. The institutional vehicle, once built, exceeds the purpose for which it was built and develops its own trajectory across the conditions that follow.

The cost of the trajectory has been paid across the centuries in forms the founders would have recognized only partially. The Reformed religious commitments that the seventeenth-century founders considered the operative purpose of their institutions have largely disappeared from the institutions' present-day operations. The denominational communities that the antebellum founders

considered the operative purpose of their institutions have, in many cases, been dissolved into the broader American religious landscape where the older denominational distinctions no longer organize the principal lines of religious life. The Protestant Establishment that the early-twentieth-century institutions considered the operative purpose of their admissions and residential structures has been dismantled, replaced by a more demographically diverse leadership configuration whose religious composition the older configuration would not have considered acceptable. The institutional autonomy that the institutions defended against state interference at *Dartmouth* in 1819 has been compromised, in operational terms, by the institutions' dependence on federal research funding and federal student aid, even as the legal autonomy remains intact.

What the institutions have retained, across all of these transformations, is the institutional position. Harvard occupies, in 2024, the structural position in American institutional life that it occupied in 1900, that it occupied in 1800, that it occupied in 1700, that it occupied in 1640 when its first class graduated. The position has carried different specific content across the centuries. The position itself has been continuous. The institutions, by virtue of their accumulated capital, their alumni networks, their reputational standing, and their position in the broader institutional ecology, occupy structural positions in American leadership formation that no other institutions match and that the country's other institutions have largely organized themselves around. The graduates entering the senior management of the country's industries do so through the institutional channels the colleges have established. The financial flows that operate through the country's investment industry do so through firms whose senior staff the colleges have predominantly trained. The legal apparatus that operates through the country's courts does so through judges and senior practitioners whose formative institutional experience was at the major law schools the colleges house. The political leadership that operates through the country's federal government does so through officials whose formation, across both parties and across the ideological spectrum, runs predominantly through the same institutional channels.

The configuration is not, in its operational features, the configuration the colonial founders specifically built. It is the configuration that resulted from the institutional vehicle they built being adapted, generation after generation, to the conditions that the subsequent centuries presented. The founders' specific religious commitments did not survive the adaptations. The founders' institutional vehicle did. The vehicle is now operating, in its present configuration, with the institutional weight of the four centuries of its accumulated capacity, in a country whose religious, demographic, economic, and cultural composition the colonial founders could not have specifically imagined.

What the case demonstrates, when laid out across its full arc, is the structural feature the work has been tracking from the beginning. Henry VIII was solving his marital and financial problem. He was not designing the long-term constitutional structure of the English-speaking world. John Winthrop was building a settlement that would be a city upon a hill. He was not designing the institutional infrastructure of twenty-first-century global capitalism. John Witherspoon was teaching

Reformed theology and Scottish Enlightenment moral philosophy to a small group of Presbyterian students in 1770s Princeton. He was not designing the consulting and investment-banking pipeline that his institution would, two and a half centuries later, occupy. Each apex operator solved the problems of their period with the institutional resources their predecessors had built. The institutional resources, deployed across successive generations, accumulated into outcomes none of the operators had specifically planned. The trajectory was the cumulative product of operators each working at the scale of their own period and within the constraints of their own conditions. Across centuries the accumulation became what the institutions have become. The founders are not responsible for the outcome. Neither, in any specific sense, is anyone else. The outcome is what the institutional logic of the configuration produced, given the conditions across which it operated.

This is what institutional power does across centuries. It carries forward whatever the founders built, into conditions the founders did not foresee, and produces outcomes the founders did not plan. The Believers' Republic was, in its founding moment, what its founders said it was: a religious settlement organized around a specific Reformed religious commitment. The Believers' Republic is, in its present moment, what its founders' descendants have made of it across four centuries of institutional development: a configuration of educational institutions occupying the senior leadership-formation function of the broader American political and economic order. The continuity runs through the institutional vehicle. The substance of what the vehicle now carries is the substance that the conditions of the present have placed into it. The conditions of the present, in turn, are the conditions the four centuries of institutional development have produced.

The case ends where it began, with the institutional vehicles and what they carry across time. Henry's marriage produced the Anglican settlement, which produced the Puritan migration, which produced Harvard, which produced — across four centuries — Harvard. The vehicle has been continuous. What the vehicle has carried has changed across every generation that has operated it. The pattern is the pattern of institutional power across long historical periods. It is the pattern the work has been tracking across all its cases. It is the pattern that, once recognized, allows the trajectory to be seen for what it is: the cumulative outcome of operational decisions made by apex operators across centuries, each working at the scale of their own period, each building institutional vehicles for their own purposes, each contributing to a long arc whose endpoint none of them could have foreseen and that none of them would have been able to design even had they been able to foresee it.

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